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REAL THAI CURRIES

Essential tools and techniques for mastering them

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HUNGARIAN FEAST

Chicken paprikash has never tasted better

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PLUS BUENOS AIRES' MOST ENTICING FOODS: HOW TO MAKE FLAN, EMPANADAS, AND MORE

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Hungarian-Style Stuffed Cabbage
See page 81 for recipe.






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A large blue crab is the central focus, resting on a perforated metal tray. The crab's shell is a vibrant blue with a fine, dotted pattern. Its legs are a mix of blue and orange. To the right of the main crab, there are several orange-colored crab legs. In the background and foreground, other blue crabs are partially visible. The tray is surrounded by chunks of clear ice, suggesting the crabs are being kept fresh. The overall scene is brightly lit, emphasizing the colors and textures of the seafood.

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Hungary's soulful cooking has been passed down through generations. In the hands of the country's home cooks, chicken paprikash, stuffed cabbage rolls simmered in a paprika-spiked tomato sauce, and sheet cake dotted with ripe plums are the hallmarks of one of Europe's most delicious cuisines. *By Carolyn Bánfalvi*

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For one writer, returning home to Canada's Prince Edward Island means clambakes on the beach with family and classic Acadian comfort food such as chicken *fricot* with airy, herbed dumplings; crispy cod cakes with tangy green tomato relish; creamy scalloped potatoes; caramel-topped bread pudding, and more. *By Melissa Buote*

Cover Hungarian-Style Stuffed Cabbage PHOTOGRAPH BY INGALLS PHOTOGRAPHY

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CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: JAMES OSELAND; INGALLS PHOTOGRAPHY; TODD COLEMAN



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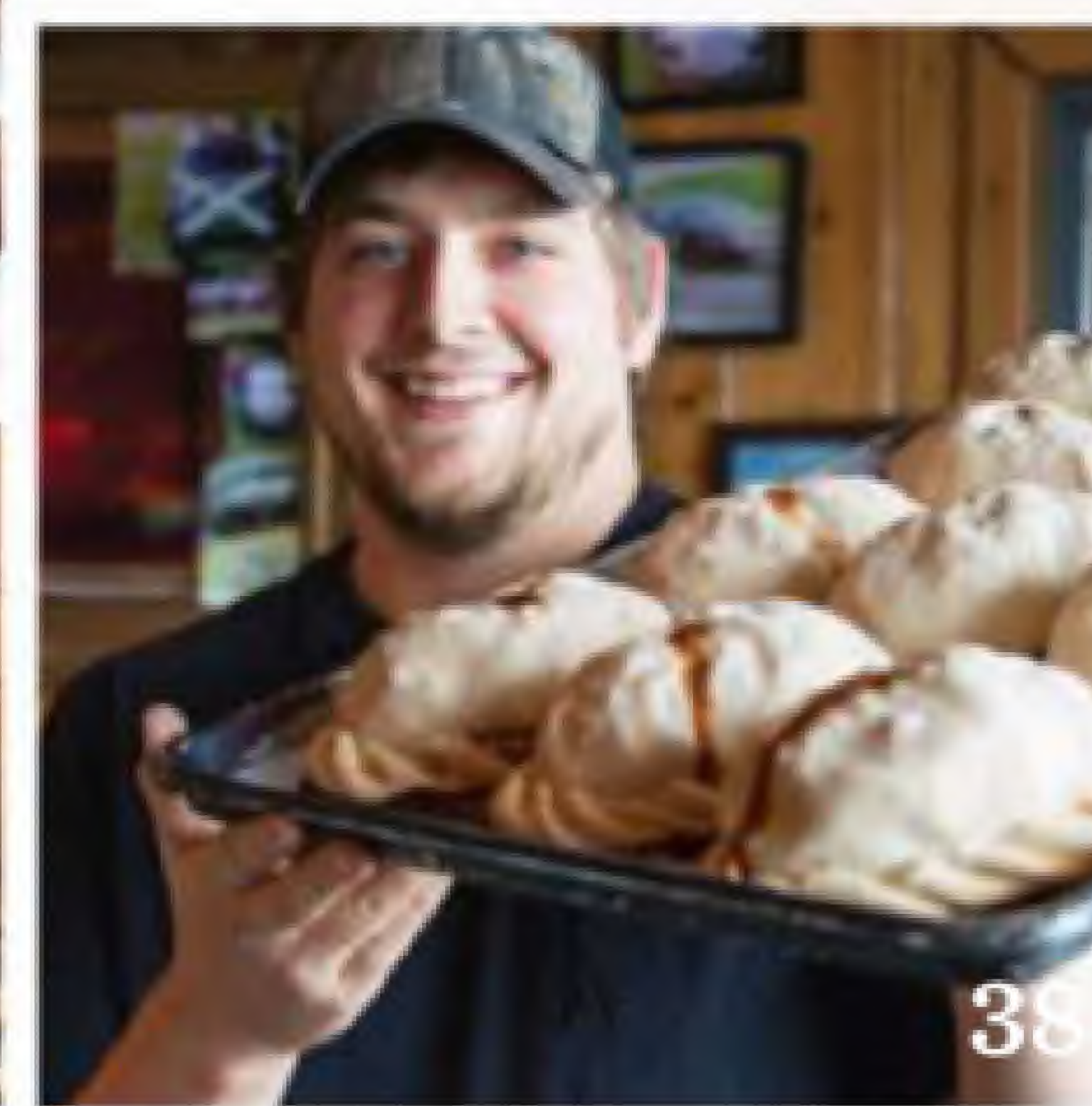
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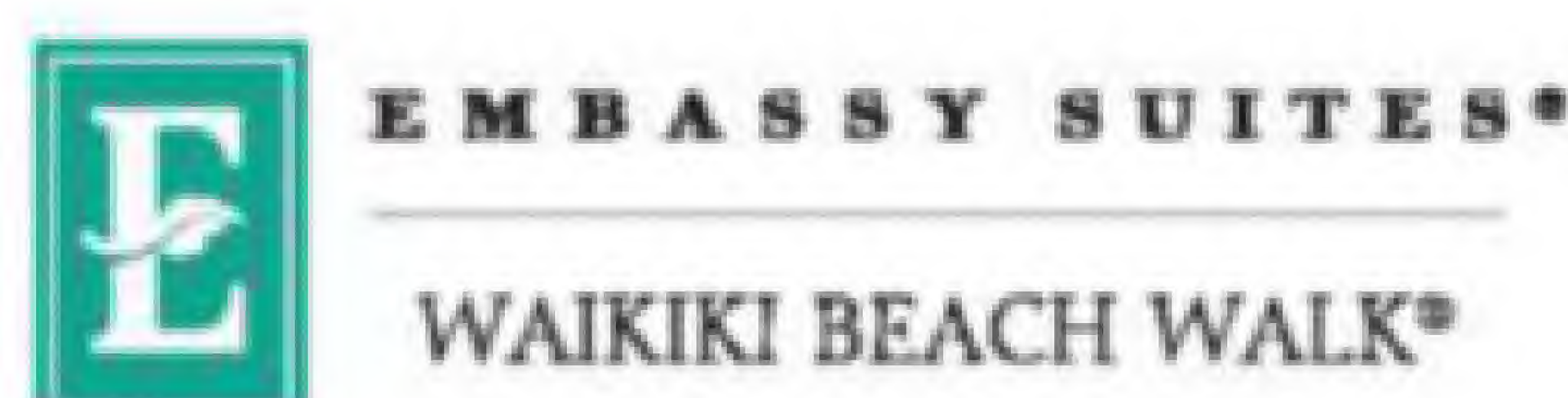
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O‘ahu’s vibrant and delicious food scene celebrates the bounty of the land and sea and the many food cultures that have fused here. But even in urban Honolulu with its eclectic mix of eateries, Hawaiian cuisine, the food of Hawai‘i’s native people, is still the most treasured to punctuate special holidays or significant life events, telling the story of the people and culture through the millennia.

The Cuisine At a lū‘au or Hawaiian celebration feast the star is lū‘au pork, the meat of a whole pig smoldered in an imu, an underground oven, succulent, smoky and savory like the pulled pork of the South.

Poi, made from steamed and pounded taro root, is the starchy element of a Hawaiian menu, much like rice or potatoes in other cuisines, bland by nature but nourishing and filling. Poi was essential to the Hawaiian people and taro is linked to their cultural creation.

Poi is best eaten together with lū‘au pork and lomi lomi salmon, a refreshing dish of salted salmon bits, tomatoes and onion. The salted salmon points to the days when European whalers stopped in Hawai‘i to provision their ships, exchanging their salted salmon for salted beef.

The Story For centuries beef was raised by the paniolo, Hawaiian cowboys; dishes like pipikaula, Hawaiian style beef jerky, are still cherished at a celebration feast.

The Chinese, the first Asian immigrants to the islands, lent their long rice or cellophane noodles to the Hawaiian table, cooked with chicken and ginger.

The word lū‘au also refers to the broad heart-shaped leaves of the taro plant. Well-cooked lū‘au, combined with squid and coconut milk is divine as is a lau lau, long steamed lū‘au leaves bundled around pork and salted butter fish.

The Experience A celebratory feast includes poke, bite sized seasoned morsels of raw ‘ahi (tuna). Sweet endings to the meal include haupia, a velvety coconut pudding, lū‘au, a thick pudding of grated taro and coconut and of course, fresh tropical fruits.

More than just a gustatory feast, a lū‘au encompasses mele (song) and hula (dance), telling stories of families and life in Hawai‘i. Experiencing Hawaiian cuisine is more than just delicious eating – on O‘ahu, the gathering place, it’s experiencing the time honored roots of Hawai‘i’s culture and people. Visit O‘ahu today, your experience awaits.

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Curry Whisperer

An American chef has a way with a quintessential Thai dish

I'D BEEN HEARING about the chef Andy Ricker for years. Rumor was that at his Portland, Oregon, restaurant Pok Pok, Ricker, a native Vermonter in his 40s, was making authentic northern Thai food. I was intrigued but skeptical. I've lived in South-east Asia; I've spent a lot of time in Thailand. I couldn't quite believe that an American-born chef was cooking the kind of forceful, complex-tasting food I knew from my travels in that part of the world.

Then, about four years ago, I finally ate at Pok Pok. I was with a group of food writers, and we ended up ordering nearly three-quarters of the menu. I kid you not when I say that every dish was pitch-perfect. The papaya salad had the vigor and balanced flavors of ones I'd eaten in northeast Thailand. The charcoal-grilled eggplant was smoky and succulent, the catfish *laap* was miraculous. The pork shoulder curry was so good that I blurted out, "Oh, my gosh!"

When you first go to Thailand your gustatory world turns Technicolor. There's food everywhere: in markets, where there are vegetables, herbs, and mounds of spice pastes in a rainbow of colors you couldn't have previously imagined; on the street, where there are

vendors tending bubbling pots and sizzling woks in a cloud of fragrance. Each bite you take offers amazing and diverse flavors. You thought you knew Thai food from your favorite Thai joint back home. But you discover that the real deal isn't at all what you thought it was. Don't get me wrong: I like my neighborhood Thai restaurant. Their oven-baked chicken breast with yellow curry is tasty. But baked chicken breast? The restaurant caters to American tastes, and the dish is an adaptation, not an interpretation. For interpretations, you need an interpreter. That's where a fellow like Ricker steps in. He took his first trip to Thailand in the 1980s, and his world changed.

For this issue, we asked Ricker to change ours. We asked him to demystify curry, a fundamental Thai food that's often misinterpreted. Together we came up with "The Star of Siam," an information-filled article detailing tools, techniques, and more—a sort of everything-you'll-ever-need-to-know primer to make four classic Thai curries. You may not get to Thailand this year, but with the recipes starting on page 44, you'll discover for yourself the magnificence of the country's curries. What's more, in our Kitchen section (page 95), we bring the cooking full circle, with inspired ideas for your leftover curry pastes, from noodles to, yes, even oven-baked chicken.

—JAMES OSELAND, Editor-in-Chief

Chef Andy Ricker tends the *tao*, a charcoal stove used in Thailand for charring curry paste aromatics.



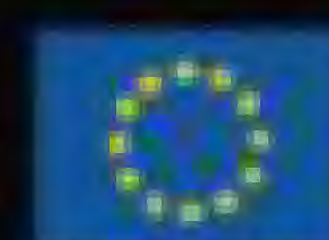

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FARE

Travels and Tipples from the World of Food, Plus Agenda and More



Halfway Home

A long-gone Ozark tavern lives on in a slice of cake

Half-a-Hill Tavern's sour chocolate cake (see page 16 for recipe).

MY HOMETOWN OF SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, isn't so different from other towns in the Ozark Mountains: a smattering of strip malls, hospitals, and more churches than you can shake a stick at. There's a Chili's on one corner, a Golden Corral on the next. Or, if you're feeling deep in the pockets, you can head to the Red Lobster, where my prom date treated me to dinner.

Back when my family put down roots here in the 1920s, mom-and-pop businesses still ruled the day. My great-great-grandparents, Maude Belle and Walter Clarence Hickman, opened Half-a-Hill Tavern on ten acres in Greene County, just south of town. Maude read a story in a ladies' magazine about two lovers meeting "halfway up a hill" and felt the name befit a tavern nestled in the rolling foothills.

It was one of the few restaurants in town at the time, and Sunday dinners brought in locals as well as workers traveling through to Chadwick, a logging hub at the end of the railroad line, for a



A 1929 photograph of Springfield, Missouri's Half-a-Hill Tavern.

taste of Maude's famous cooking: succulent pork chops, rolled in eggs, milk, and crushed saltines; and crispy lard-fried chicken, the meat tender from a soak in home-made buttermilk, the skin spicy from a dusting of cayenne.

The Ozarks experience a long growing season, so for most of the year each dinner came adorned with fresh green beans from the Half-a-Hill garden scattered with pork cracklings. Maude was known, too, for her caramelized sweet potatoes cooked in bacon fat, buttery corn, and fluffy biscuits dripping with sorghum butter. Desserts included hand-cranked vanilla ice cream topped with mincemeat, the fruit and spices laced with browned ground

beef; and an iced sour chocolate sheet cake made with milk spiked with vinegar, moistened with shortening, and flavored with cinnamon and vanilla.

Maude's granddaughter, whom I called "Mimi," grew up swooshing around the wooden floors of Half-a-Hill on her roller skates. The rambling clapboard building, affectionately referred to as "The Hill," featured a dining pavilion where Mickey Marcell's band, along with Carl Snyder on banjo, played for Saturday dances. My grandfather, "Papa," used to stop by to hear the music, eventually convincing Mimi to join him on the dance floor. They married later, in 1960, and raised their children in a ranch-style house nearby where Mimi cooked those same dinners for her own family.

I live in Manhattan now,

and when I visit the land where the tavern once stood, it's hard not to feel heartbroken that a strip mall called Half-a-Hill Center has taken the place of my family's old restaurant. Fortunately, I learned how to make many of Maude's dishes from Mimi. When I want a taste of the Ozarks, no matter where I am, I can spike milk with a touch of vinegar to start baking my favorite sour chocolate cake, which is as sweet and tender now as it was when my great-great-grandparents served it at The Hill. —*Anne Roderique-Jones*

Sour Chocolate Cake

SERVES 10-12

Vinegar gives this cinnamon chocolate cake a pleasing tang and, mixed with shortening, a moist, light crumb. The recipe is from Springfield, Missouri's former Half-a-Hill Tavern.

For the cake:

- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 1/2 tsp. white vinegar
- 3/4 cup shortening, plus more for greasing
- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 8 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten

For the icing:

- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 3 tbsp. cocoa powder
- 1/4 cup milk
- 5 tbsp. unsalted butter

1 Make the cake: Mix milk and vinegar in bowl; let sit until slightly curdled, about 10 minutes.

2 Heat oven to 350°. Grease a 9" x 13" baking dish with shortening. Whisk flour, sugar, cinnamon, and baking soda in a bowl; make a well in the center. Bring shortening, cocoa powder, butter, and 1/2 cup water to a boil in a 1-qt. saucepan. Cook, whisking constantly, until smooth, 5-7 minutes; let cool slightly. Whisk in milk mixture and eggs. Stir wet ingredients into dry ingredients until a smooth batter forms. Pour batter into greased pan and smooth top. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 25-30 minutes; let cool.

3 Make the icing: Whisk confectioners' sugar and cocoa powder in a bowl. Simmer milk and butter in a 2-qt. saucepan over medium heat until butter is melted, 3-4 minutes. Whisk in sugar mixture until smooth. Pour icing over cake; let set completely, about 30 minutes.



One Good Bottle At a luncheon recently, I was poured a sauvignon blanc tasting so intensely of the Italian hillsides it came from that it elevated the lobster dish I was eating, throwing the crustacean's rich, natural flavor into high relief. Like the lobster, the soil in which the grapes for **Meroi Sauvignon Colli Orientali del Friuli 2011 (\$37)** grow, a calcium-rich mudstone called *ponca*, was once beneath the ocean. The wine's minerality and acidity buoy seafoods and poultry, while its flowery aroma and herbaceous finish layer on complexity. Winemaker Damiano Meroi grows his grapes organically, presses them gently, and barrel-ages wines from different plots separately before blending. His family has been coddling their grapes for five generations, at times against tremendous odds: Forced to cook for Nazis occupying their small winery and restaurant during World War II, they built a fake wall in their cellar and hid their best bottles until the armistice. —*Betsy Andrews*



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A Toast to Paradise

The Hawaiian island of Oahu hosts the happiest of happy hours

WHILE I LIKE TO THINK I'm above the cliché, there are few things I love more than cradling an orchid-topped mai tai and snacking on coconut shrimp as the sun slips into the Pacific Ocean. Sure, it may seem touristy for me to lounge around at Honolulu's House Without a Key, sipping cocktails next to the spreading kiawe tree, listening to the Sunset Serenaders strum "He Aloha No O Honolulu," but I'm actually taking part in a time-honored local tradition—the *pau hana*.

Loosely translated, *pau hana*, a Hawaii pidgin term, means "to stop work." It also refers to Honolulu's vibrant cocktail-fueled happy hours, which generally take place between 4 and 6 p.m. and date back to the midcentury tiki craze for all things Polynesian. Some say it all started in 1957, when Harry Yee, the head bartender at Waikiki's Hilton Hawaiian Village, invented the Blue Hawaii, a luridly colored curaçao punch topped with a pineapple wedge and miniature paper umbrella. The drink set the island's standard for tropical cocktail culture, ensuring a steady supply of neon-hued, fruity crowd-pleasers for decades to come.

These days Hawaiian bartenders are looking more to locally grown ingredients and balanced mixology to redefine what happy hour tastes like in paradise. I've whiled away long afternoons at the polished Monkeypod Kitchen in Ko Olina, about a half-hour outside of Honolulu. Here, co-owners Peter Merriman and Bill Terry offer up the Ho'opono Potion, a bracing mixture of tequila, Aperol, cucumber, and fresh lime juice, as well as the South Shore Sangria, a combination of amaretto and orange liqueurs, cava, and fresh juices topped with a float of red wine. A bright and lethal concoction, it tastes like an adult version of Hawaiian Punch.

I'm just as partial to Nico's Pier 38. Lyon-born chef Nico Chaize once ran a lunch take-out joint on the commercial pier that hosts Honolulu's fish market, but last year he expanded it into a popular den that serves some of Oahu's most creative drinks along the waterfront. The French Connection cocktail at Nico's is a citrusy marriage of cognac and Hawaiian vodka sweetened with passion fruit syrup.

Food, namely pupu, is equally integral to the *pau hana* experience, and Nico's serves some of my favorites. Sitting at the bar, nursing a drink and nibbling on seared ahi poke, sashimi plat-

LINNY MORRIS (7)



Clockwise from top left: a tropical guava mojito from Oahu's House Without a Key; a happy hour customer enjoys crunchy poke tacos *pau hana*-style at Monkeypod Kitchen; a salad at Side Street Inn, with greens, Maui onions, avocado, tomatoes, and shrimp tossed in a caper and red wine vinaigrette; a chef serves "Nori-chos" at Tokkuri Tei; the magnificent *pau hana* view from House Without a Key; a well-stocked shelf of *shochu* at Tokkuri Tei; a waitress carrying a tray of Rogue Ales provides service with a smile at Side Street Inn.



Steeped in tradition.



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AGENDA

October 2013

3-9

PUNGGI GINSENG FESTIVAL

Yeongju, South Korea

Punggi ginseng, a variety of the perennial that's native to South Korea's Sobaeksan Mountains, is prized for its health benefits. But what lures visitors to this event is the bitter root's culinary attributes. Venture into mountain forests to pick your own, then have a go at making ginseng-infused soju (rice liquor), and gorge on treats like ginseng tempura, ginseng taffy, and fried ginseng drizzled with honey. Info: ginsengfestival.com

7

Anniversary

BAR CODE PATENTED

Washington, D.C., 1952

The prototype for the bar code, an icon of grocery checkout lines, was invented on a Florida beach by former Drexel Institute of Technology graduate student Norman Joseph Woodland, who dreamed it up while drawing in the sand. After struggling with fellow student Bernard Silver to find a way to track food products using identification patterns, Woodland found inspiration in something he learned in Boy Scouts: the Morse Code. "I just extended the dots and dashes downwards, and made narrow lines and wide lines out of them," he said.



12-13

DUNGENESS CRAB & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

Port Angeles, Washington

Aside from crab-catching competitions, cooking demonstrations, and sand volleyball, the highlight of this fishy festival, held near the seaside village of Dungeness where a certain sweet-fleshed crustacean got its name, is the food. Visitors enjoy steamed or chilled whole crab, Dungeness enchiladas, and bisques. A wine and beer garden features regional libations, as well as tastings. Info: crabfestival.org



12-13

SAGRA DELLA ZUCCA BERTAGNINA (SQUASH FESTIVAL)

Dorno, Italy

The town Dorno, in Italy's Lombardy region, celebrates the *bertagnina*, a succulent pumpkin beloved for its rich meat and its resemblance to a man wearing a beret. Visitors can sample specialties such as pumpkin risotto, pumpkin ravioli, (continued on page 24)

ters, and fresh fish cooked in coconut milk with cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, and lime juice is a slice of paradise.

Another one of my regular hangouts is Tokkuri Tei, a neighborhood *pau hana* favorite that's also one of Honolulu's oldest *izakayas*. I often sit at the sushi counter sipping a sweet-tart *umesu* cooler, a sparkling plum wine cocktail that pairs beautifully with the food served here, whether it's spicy tuna on tempura-battered nori chips, or the spider roll stuffed with poke and salmon roe that I've managed to become addicted to.

When it comes to Oahu's happiest hours, I've noticed there's a direct ratio of tiki-tacky décor to unforgettable good times. Side Street Inn on Hopaka Street neatly illustrates that equation. The

bar occupies a gritty back alley in the downtown business district, miles from the surf on Waikiki. I pull up a stool at this dive, with its sticky dispensers of lychee and mandarin orange infused vodkas, and the bartender prepares a refresher dubbed the Riki Tiki made of pineapple juice, coconut and spiced rums, and mango, which I enjoy with an order of pork chops and fried rice studded with *char siu*.

If I stay late enough, I can catch chefs coming in as they get off their dinner shifts. They drop by to relax, gnaw on pork loin chops fried with garlic salt and pepper, or just toss back a few drinks. The *pau hana*'s official hours might be 4 to 6 p.m., but locals in Oahu know that happy hour begins anytime you find a moment to unwind. —Shane Mitchell



South Shore Sangria

Makes 1 cocktail

Muddle 1 slice each lemon, lime, and orange in a goblet. Add ice and 1 oz. each of amaretto and orange liqueurs and fresh orange and pineapple juices; stir. Top with 2 oz. sparkling white wine; using the back of a spoon, float ½ oz. red wine on top. Garnish with a slice of lemon, lime, and orange.



Blue Hawaii

Makes 1 cocktail

Stir 2 oz. each pineapple juice and blue curaçao, 1 ½ oz. each vodka and sour mix (see "Sour Power," page 96), and ½ oz. half & half in a shaker. Pour over crushed ice in a hurricane glass; garnish with a pineapple wedge, maraschino cherry, or, if you like, an orchid.

Ho'opono Potion

Makes 1 cocktail

Muddle 3 slices cucumber with 1 oz. fresh lime juice in a cocktail shaker. Add 1 ½ oz. silver tequila, ¾ oz. simple syrup, ½ oz. Aperol, and ice. Shake vigorously and pour over a large ice cube in a tumbler; garnish with a cucumber slice.



Riki Tiki

Makes 1 cocktail

Combine 1 oz. fresh mango purée, ¾ oz. each coconut and spiced rums, and ½ oz. each sour mix (see "Sour Power," page 96) and fresh pineapple juice in a cocktail shaker filled with ice. Shake vigorously and strain into a martini glass; garnish with a paper umbrella.

FROM LEFT: VINCE CLEMENTES/ALAMY (BAR CODE); YAY MEDIA AS/ALAMY (CRAB); MICHAEL KRAUS (4)



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“Being creative with ingredients gives you the ability to build deeper flavors.”

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Executive Chef Brendan McHale
TastingTable.com, New York

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L.A.'S OCEANFRONT RESORT

Pleasure Dome

Why Switzerland's Gruyère-filled malakoff is a secret worth sharing

LIKE THE HORDES of diners crowded around the tables at Au Coeur de la Côte, a rustic restaurant with a wood-beamed ceiling in the picturesque village of Vinzel in western Switzerland, my friend Caroline and I have skipped breakfast. That way we can do full justice at lunchtime to the malakoff, a Vinzel specialty and arguably Switzerland's best-kept culinary secret.

Golden cheese-filled domes, malakoffs start with grated Gruyère that's often seasoned with nutmeg, white wine, and kirsch, a sour cherry-flavored brandy, then mixed into a batter with eggs and flour, mounded onto rounds of white bread, and deep-fried. Cradled by the bread and crusted by the hot oil into an inverted teacup shape, the malakoff is a fritter of fondue; it's a beignet of raclette. But unlike those more high-profile cousins, it is not easy to find, even in its native Switzerland. Lucky for me, Au Coeur de la Côte, which serves the country's best rendition of the malakoff, is only a 30-kilometer drive from my hometown of Geneva. So every summer, when I visit, I grab a friend and head for the cheesy treat.

Over a bottle of chilled chasselas—a steely aperitif wine made from grapes that grow in the restaurant's own vineyards—and a bowl of crisp greens dressed in a creamy *sauce maison*, we sit in anticipation of our first steaming malakoff.

There are all sorts of tales about malakoffs' beginnings, but the most likely explanation I've found is that they were brought back to the Vinzel area by Swiss mercenaries who, in 1855, fought against the Russians alongside French and British troops to capture the Malakoff Tower in what is present-day Ukraine, during the Crimean War. Those mercenaries were often fed deep-fried strips of cheese, a military camp snack they took home with them to Vinzel and surrounding villages. The recipe would undergo some minor changes by the late 1800s—morphing from strips of cheese to fritters—when area restaurants started offering malakoffs on their menus.

Though I have eaten malakoffs many times before, the first crunch of crispy exterior and its subsequent surrender to the gooey, winey Gruyère are as unexpected as they were the very first time I

★ Malakoffs

(Swiss Fondue Fritters)

MAKES 6

A decadent mixture of Gruyère, garlic, wine, and kirsch is scooped onto bread rounds and fried to perfection—golden and crisp outside, gooey inside—in this recipe for classic Swiss fritters (pictured below).

- 6 slices white Pullman bread
- 16 oz. Gruyère cheese, grated
- 3 tbsp. flour
- 1/8 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 2 tbsp. kirsch (cherry brandy)
- Canola oil, for frying

1 Using a 3" ring cutter, cut one round from center of each slice of bread; reserve crusts for another use. Mix cheese, flour, nutmeg, garlic, eggs, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Slowly add wine and kirsch; stir until a thick paste forms. Divide mixture between bread rounds, and using wet hands, mold cheese mixture into smooth 1 1/2"-high mounds.

2 Pour enough oil into a 6-qt. saucepan to reach a depth of 2". Heat until a deep-fry thermometer reads 350°. Fry malakoffs cheese side down, flipping once, until golden brown and bread is crisp, 6–8 minutes. Serve immediately.





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(continued from page 20) and *baci di Dorno* (Dorno's kisses): cocoa-dusted pumpkin, chocolate, and amaretto confections. Info: sagradella zucca.it

14

Birthday

THOMAS KELLER

October 14, 1955

One of five children, Thomas Keller got his start washing dishes at Florida's Palm Beach Yacht Club, where his mom worked. Today he is the owner of 11 restaurants, the author of five cookbooks, and the only American-born chef with



multiple three-star Michelin ratings, for Manhattan's Per Se and the French Laundry in Yountville, California. When he took

over the latter in 1994, his technique and culinary wit, embodied in signatures like "oysters and pearls"—Osetra caviar and oysters draped over tapioca sabayon—helped put America on the global gastronomical map.

19

BOUDIN COOK-OFF

Lafayette, Louisiana

To sample the best of the classic Cajun pork and rice sausage, head to this bayou city where 20 regional masters compete to be King of Boudin. Commoners can try innovations like boudin egg rolls and boudin pie, get their hands dirty with the boudin ring toss, and make like a pig in the boudin eating contest. Info: boudincooff.com

19-20

HARVEST JOHNNY CAKE FESTIVAL

West Kingston, Rhode Island

This annual festival offers the smallest state's finest fare, including clam chowder, cider donuts, and the namesake johnny cake, a pancake made with stone-ground white cornmeal from Kenyon's Grist Mill, where the millstones have been in use since 1696. Info: johnnycakefestival.com

19-20

LA FÊTE DU VENTRE ET DE LA GASTRONOMIE NORMANDE

(Festival of the Stomach and Norman Gastronomy)

Rouen, France

Held in the market square in the capital of France's Upper Normandy region, this fête dates to 1935 when farmers gathered to fill their bellies with the cream of the year's crop. Nowadays thespians and musicians take to the streets, *boulangers* bake breads, cheese makers flambé their Camembert with Calvados, and cooks whip up delicacies like scallops with chestnut purée. Info: feteduventre.com

devoured one.

Though I've eaten good versions of malakoffs elsewhere, I pine for Au Coeur de la Côte's all year long. When I ask owner Philip Wolfsteiner what makes his so exemplary, he is cagey. "It's a well-guarded fourth-generation secret," he says laughing, though he hints that the cheese, which has been furnished by the same supplier since the restaurant first opened in 1896, should be "neither too salty nor too mild."

Caroline and I eat our first round of malakoffs along with a couple of tart cornichons, pickled onions, and a bit of strong mustard to cut the richness. Then we refill our glasses and wait for round two. As we do, we take in the atmosphere of this place, its vibe as convivial as a fondue party. All around us old friends are catching up with each other, discussing jobs, children, and dreams that didn't happen but may still come true. I notice how, after gobbling up one malakoff,

The first crunch of a crispy malakoff surrenders to the gooey, winey Gruyère within

and then a second, they debate, as Caroline and I do, whether to have a third, or even a fourth. Eventually, after more wine and some cajoling from Wolfsteiner, the decision is made with a joyful "Why not?"

Once we can't possibly eat another, Wolfsteiner insists we stick around for dessert. His recommendation: *cerises à l'eau de vie*, locally grown cherries soaked in liqueur. Light and mildly sweet, they are the perfect counterpoint to our heavy main course. But as we leave the restaurant and step out into the warm air, we realize they have cleansed our palates perhaps too much. Right away we start pining for next year, when our annual pilgrimage for malakoffs will take place again. —Savita Iyer



Return of the Lumper

"Aw, now, you're as snug as a Lumper in a furrow," my Aunt Bella used to say when she tucked me into bed during my childhood holidays in Dublin.

I had no idea what she was talking about.

The Lumper, it turned out, was a potato—but not just any potato. It was notorious, associated more than any other with the Great Famine of the 19th century. While the name still strikes a doleful chord, it's as much a part of the Irish oeuvre as prayer, rain, and Guinness-fueled debate. And after a 170-year absence, it's been restored to commercial life thanks to a potato farmer named Michael McKillop.

The knobby Lumper, which first came to Ireland from England in the early 1800s, was an instant hit. That it kept badly and was once described as a "vile watery bulb" mattered little; it was prolific, grew easily in poor soil, and was well-suited for cattle fodder. But it proved too thin-skinned to resist *Phytophthora infestans*—potato blight—when it struck in 1845; starvation ensued when the Lumper crops failed.

Still, in the spring of 2007, when McKillop spotted a rare specimen of the variety at a potato breeders' fair, he decided to test the old Lumper out. A year later, one wee spud produced 28 fine-tasting potatoes with a waxy texture similar to a Yukon gold. He concluded the Lumper's bad press was the result of planting in barren soil: It simply needed good terroir to flourish.

McKillop worked with the Scottish Agricultural College to produce a reliable commercial potato. While it is not yet exported to the United States, if you're traveling to Dublin, you can sample Lumpers at Boxty House in the Temple Bar district. There, during the October harvest, chef Pádraic Óg Gallagher serves them boiled, baked, and pressed into the pancakes the restaurant's named for. "They're easy to grate, don't need peeling, and the skin adds lovely little flecks," he says.

Still, Gallagher cautions, it might take encouragement for the Irish to welcome the Lumper back. "The Famine is still a very emotional subject here," he told me. "I grew a few Lumpers once but lost them to frost. It brought a tear to my eye, but then I thought how lucky I was—at least I had something else to eat." —Clarissa Hyman



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THE KEEPERS OF TRADITION

I vividly recall the first time my father took me to lunch at El Bajío in the working-class Mexico City neighborhood of Azcapotzalco back in the late 1970s. There was the smell of fresh tortillas hitting the griddle and the sound of cleavers chopping meat on thick wooden boards as I feasted on a soulful dish of *mole de olla*—a guajillo chile broth bathing juicy hunks of pork *espinazo* (backbone) and thick slices of zucchini. I can still see the chile-red stains left on my fingers from picking the tender meat off the bones.

Fast-forward to 2013: After wolfing down a piquant bowl of *chicharrón en salsa verde* (pork crackling in green sauce), I track down El Bajío's owner, Carmen "Titita" Ramírez Degollado, to offer my praise. Ramírez Degollado, who founded the restaurant with her husband 40 years ago, says the credit is entirely due to her kitchen's *mayoras*.

She introduces me to Sandra Olvera, who runs the back of the house with a combination of resolute kindness and clear instruction. She is the chief *mayora*, a position that exists only in Mexico. It dates back to the 18th century, when women ran the staff kitchens in haciendas, which were usually plantations or factories. Like any good *mayora*, Olvera was raised alongside the stoves. "El Bajío was my school, my first job, and probably my last one," she says.

Olvera's co-chef, Elia Rodríguez Bravo, puts the final touches on a fragrant pot of rice as half a dozen women in white dresses and head kerchiefs attend to bubbling pots of black beans and stews like the *chicharrón en salsa verde* I enjoyed earlier. "No shortcuts, no bouillon cubes, none of that. Just hands with *sazón*," Rodríguez Bravo assures me; the *sazón*, or "secret touch" that cooks have, is the pride of a true *mayora*.

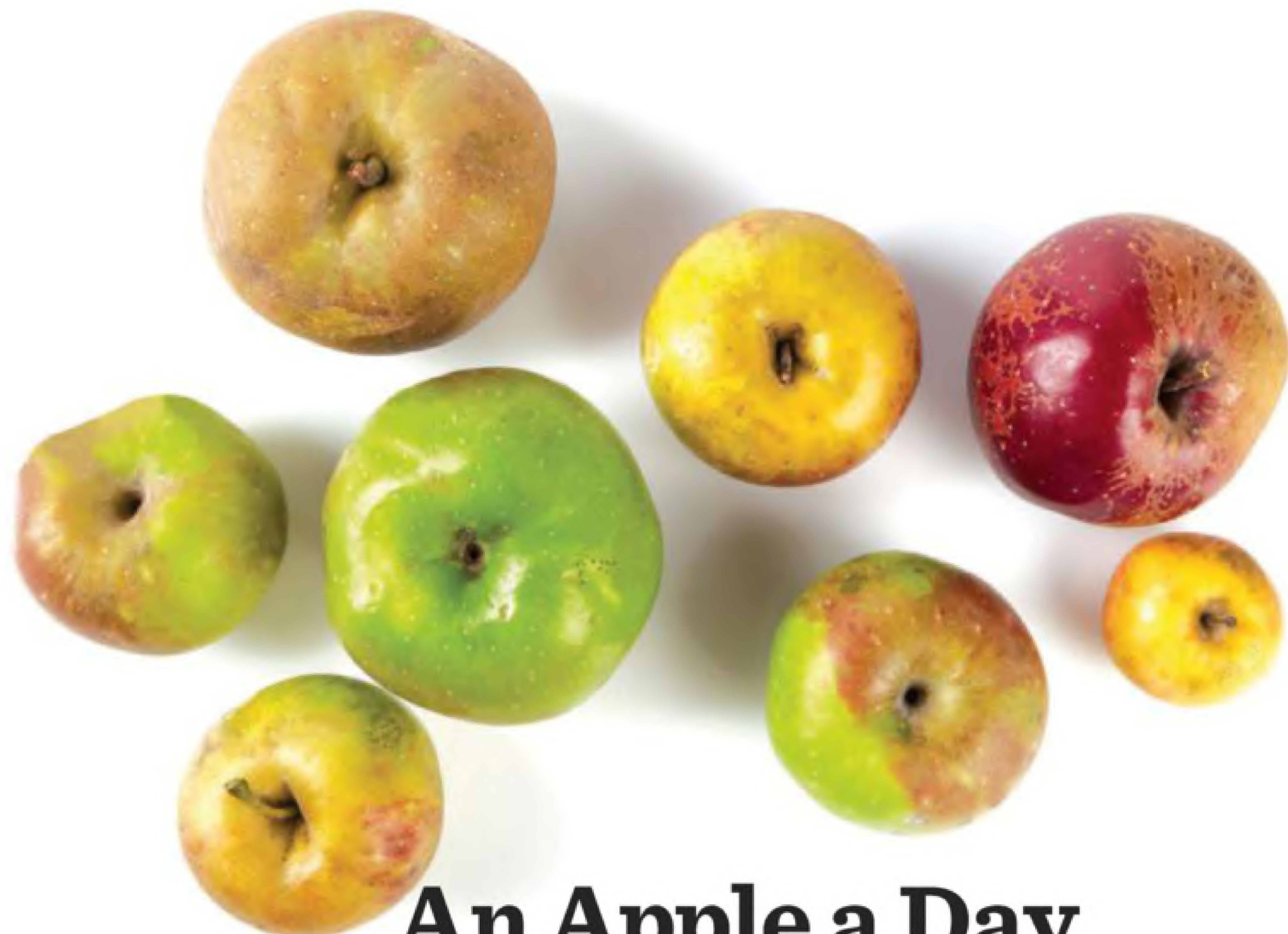
With an undying devotion to authenticity and regional flavors, Ramírez Degollado and her *mayoras* serve some of the best traditional Mexican dishes in the city. "People come here to eat something they know," she tells me, "something they have loved for years—that's what we give them."

When Ramírez Degollado and a group of investors started an ambitious expansion, which has so far placed ten branches of El Bajío around the city, I worried for my childhood favorite restaurant. She now works with an executive chef, Josep Rivera—a Spaniard and, even more surprising, a man—who oversees operations for all the El Bajío restaurants. Still, it's the *mayoras* who continue to uphold the traditions they've spent lifetimes mastering. I'm skeptical about this, at least until my wife and two kids join me for lunch at the Polanco branch. Here, I watch my seven-year-old twin boys gobble up puffy black bean-filled *gorditas infladas* and order a deep bowl of *mole de olla* for myself. As my fingers stain red, I'm comforted to know some things never change. —Mauricio Velázquez de León



Carmen "Titita" Ramírez Degollado stands in her kitchen at El Bajío.

PENNY DE LOS SANTOS; CHELSEA POMALES (FACING PAGE)



An Apple a Day

Diverse, dry, and delicious, American hard cider is making a comeback

LAST FALL I PAID A visit to Wilklow Orchards in upstate New York. I was looking for apples but not the kind you put in pies. I pulled up to a warehouse on a winding road. Inside, plastic tanks held the autumn's first harvest in potent liquid form—fizzy, fermenting hard cider. One of approximately 170 cideries in the United States, Wilklow is part of an American cider renaissance that has led to an efflorescence of flavors and styles. When I heard about this turn toward cider—some of it involving my favorite beer brewers—I knew it was time to learn more.

Greeting me at the farm was Albert Wilklow, who grew up working on his family's apple orchard. The tall, stocky 30-year-old formed Bad Seed Cider with a friend a few years ago, pressing a portion of his family's harvest into sweet juice to which he added yeast, converting its sugars to alcohol to make hard cider.

Wilklow pried off the cap of a bottle and poured me a glass. It smelled like wet slate and hay. I took a sip. It was bone-dry with gripping tannins, nothing like the candy-sweet ciders I'd tried over the years. It tasted as if it were from another era. As I drove back to New York City with a few bottles clinking in the backseat, I thought about how ordinary a cider like this must have seemed a few centuries ago.

Until the 20th century Americans were heavy hard cider drinkers. Colonists brought a taste for the drink from England, where it was wildly popular. Safer than water and cheaper to produce than beer, it traveled west with the frontier. Settlers planted apple trees and routinely put up a barrel or two of cider to

consume through the winter.

That all changed with the temperance movement. Hard cider generally requires apples high in tannins and acids, which are often inedibly bitter. While these apples form the building blocks of rich, complex ciders, they aren't good for much else. When Prohibition went into effect, cider apple trees (many of them the legacy of John Chapman, aka Johnny Appleseed) were felled to make way for sweeter fruit more suitable for eating out of hand or cooking. After Prohibition was repealed, beer and spirits eventually recovered, but cider did not; the apples were gone.

When hard cider did start reappearing on supermarket shelves in the 1970s and '80s, it was a pale imitation of what it once was, made from apple concentrate or pasteurized juice in lieu of real cider apples. This allowed big manufacturers to make a consistent product year-round instead of only in the fall when apples are harvested. But the resulting ciders lacked the complexity of those once made from whole fruit, and tended to be very sweet.

It wasn't until the late 1990s that a growing number of enthusiasts started reviving old styles, looking to the past for inspiration, as well as to Europe, where cider making remains firmly rooted in tradition. Before long, new cideries started popping up in parts of the country where pockets of cider apples

Cider apples from Castle Hill Cider in Keswick, Virginia. Clockwise from top left: Golden Russet, Winesap, Burford Red Flesh, Hewes Crab, Dabinett, Baldwin, Winesap, Granny Winkle.

WE GET
THINGS DONE
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remained—mostly on small orchards in New England and the Great Lakes states. Today, these places are home to a burgeoning American hard cider movement.

On a recent visit to southwest Michigan's Allegan County, I made my way through hills thick with apple trees to Virtue Cider, where I met founder Greg Hall in an open-sided barn filled with stainless-steel tanks. A bearded and tattooed 48-year-old, Hall was the brewmaster at Goose Island Beer Company, which helped lead the revolution in American craft brewing. In 2011, when Goose Island was purchased by Anheuser-Busch, Hall left to start Virtue, helping to launch a similar revolution with cider. "When we first started brewing, people felt like you could only make one style of beer. That's not the case now; brewers take chances," Hall says. "The same thing is happening in cider."

Rather than work with champagne yeast, favored by cider makers for its minimal impact on apples' taste, Hall tested 30 yeasts from his beer-brewing days with 20 different apple varieties looking for combinations yielding specific flavors, then blended the results. Today Virtue's blended ciders have layers that unfold like fine wines.

Hall is just one of a new generation of cider makers exploring the range of the drink. There are ciders infused with bitter hops; bacony ciders made from smoked apples; boozy ciders aged in whiskey barrels; ciders flavored with orange peel, cardamom, and pumpkin.

But with all of this experimentation, it's the traditional ciders that surprise me most. Some have sweet fruit on the nose and a dry finish. Others boast an herbaceous aroma. Some ciders, carbonated after the initial fermentation, or refermented in the bottle with new yeasts, are sparkling; others are still. Some are filtered, appearing crystalline; others are cloudy. Some are better cold, others at room temperature. And many are superb with food.

Not far from Virtue, in St. John's, Michigan, Mike Beck, a fifth-generation apple farmer, makes Uncle John's Cider. His sole ingredients are apples, champagne yeast, and time. "I want to capture the inherent characteristics of the fermented fruit," he says. Beck's ciders range from bright and bubbly to a dusky rose one made from red-fleshed fruits that has an almost charcuterie-like savoriness. All are delightful. And the credit goes to the apples, Beck says. "Put good things in the tank, and good things should happen." —Karen Shimizu

THE PANTRY, page 100: Information on ordering hard ciders, finding Oahu's best happy hour bars, and more.



Farnum Hill Semi-Dry Cider (\$16; 750 ml) Golden in the glass, with aromas of fermented fruit, this cider's rich nose and full body belie its sharp, tannic finish. Complex and delicious—just right for pairing with autumn's braised meats.



Anthem Cider (\$8; 22 oz.) Apples not traditionally used for cider—Golden Delicious, Fuji—yield an elegant, easy drink with a soft bubble and rich aromas of green banana and peaches.



Bad Seed Dry Hard Cider (\$13; 22 oz.) From a family orchard in upstate New York, this dry, stony cider opens with a pungent fragrance but wraps up with a crisp, steely finish.



Eve's Cider Rustica (\$15; 750 ml) This light, honey-colored cider is as sweet and snappy as a freshly cut apple. Try it over ice as an aperitif alongside a young cheddar or a mild blue cheese.



Doc's Draft Dry Hopped Hard Cider (\$6; 22 oz.) Fermented cider is infused with flowery, citrusy Centennial and piney Chinook hops to produce a bright, floral drink with notes of pink grapefruit. It's zesty, a little sweet, and very refreshing.



Foggy Ridge Cider First Fruit (\$15; 750 ml) Hazy and pale with whiffs of bloomy-rind cheese and just a hint of sugar on the palate, this chardonnay-like cider resolves in minerally oyster notes. It's a natural with seafood.



Slyboro Cider House Hidden Star Semi-Dry Cider (\$12; 750 ml) A frothy head, clear appearance, loads of brisk, fresh apple on the nose, and a balanced sweetness characterize this New York farmstead cider.



Wandering Aengus Wickson Cider (\$8; 500 ml) Made from crab apples, this arresting cider has a musty, almost vegetal astringency; try it with shellfish.

West County Cider Pippin (\$13; 750 ml) A deep butterscotchy aroma yields to a bone-dry, tangy finish in this cider from Massachusetts' Berkshire Mountains.



Alpenfire Flame Brute (\$22; 750 ml) French and English cider apples lend this effervescent, complex Washington State cider a rustic fragrance, creamy mouthfeel, and pleasingly bitter finish.

Tilted Shed Graviva Semi-Dry Cider (\$14; 750 ml) Aromatic and acidic with heavyweight tannins, this Sonoma County cider can stand up to spicy spareribs and other marinated and grilled meats.



Reverend Nat's Providence Traditional New England Hard Cider (\$14; 750 ml) Fermented with raisins, brown sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg, this oak-aged cider is surprisingly lean given its apple pie aroma. It's wonderful warmed slightly.



Uncle John's Russet (\$14; 750 ml) A bubbly prosecco-like cider with a rounded tartness and an earthy fruit fragrance, this hard cider would be nice to serve with both the relish plate and the holiday bird.



Virtue the Mitten (\$30; 750 ml) This blend of bourbon-barrel-aged cider and juice from fresh-pressed cider apples delivers horse-radishy aromas and hints of spiced vanilla and caramel—a good pairing with a well-aged cheddar.



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ESSAY

The Love of the Chase

In Virginia, lusty, lively hunt breakfasts offer lasting lessons

BY RITA MAE BROWN PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER TAYLOR





GRANNY HAHN WAS two years older than God—the Old Testament God, for she always delivered a list of admonitions. Along with the usual tally of manners, she added riding rules: *Loosen the reins. Heels down. Head up. Always smile—no one wants to behold a dour child.* But her most elaborate demands involved hunt breakfasts.

A silver-haired, hard-riding Diana of the Virginia hills, Granny Hahn threw fabulous hunt breakfasts, and she attended those hosted by others with an eagle eye. Usually a hunt breakfast follows a fox hunt—I hasten to add the fox is chased, not killed—so even if held at four o'clock in the afternoon, it is called a breakfast. People take off their hunting coats, often torn and dirty, don tweed jackets, and go inside where it's warm, the food and drink are most welcome, and everyone relives the drama of the hunt.

I was in first grade when I attended my first of Granny's hunt breakfasts. She had taken her fences in style that day and was lavished with compliments. The table was set with a long wide ribbon in hunt red and blue running down the center. In the middle reposed a seasonal display of squash, wheat stalks, mums, and zinnias, surrounding a sawdust-stuffed pheasant she usually kept in the downstairs closet.

A juicy joint of roast beef, bright orange sweet potatoes, a striated salad, corn muffins, wheat muffins, and fresh baked breads twisted into fanciful shapes, chilled pork pies, deviled eggs, and a breakfast casserole bursting with sausage and cheese, followed by devil's food cake, rice pudding, a baked custard covered with raspberry sauce: Most of it had been cooked in Granny's wood-burning stove. It was probably a delicious feast, but all that I remember is a punch bowl

Hunters on horseback at the Oak Ridge Estate in Arrington in central Virginia, where the author fox hunts.

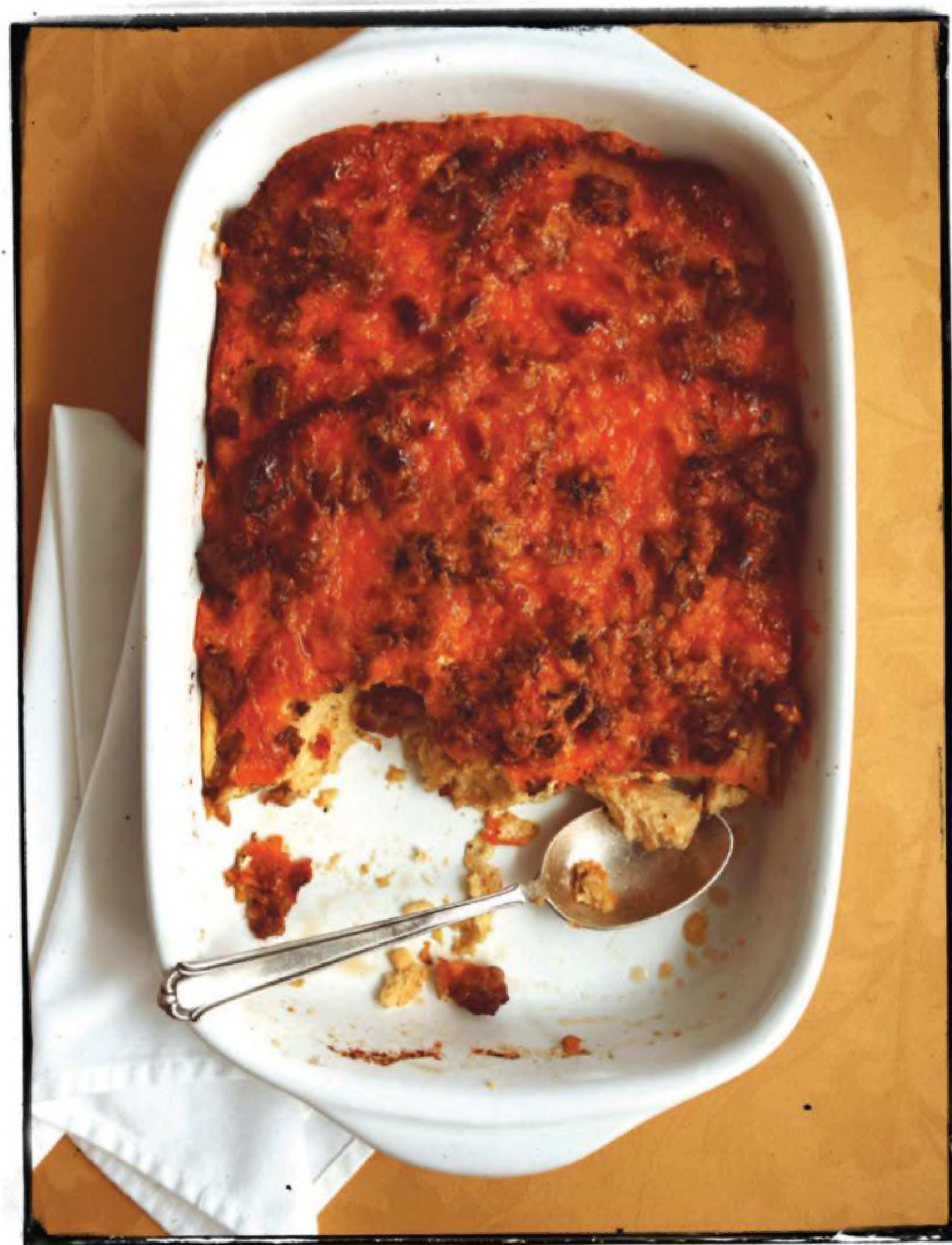
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Sausage and cheddar breakfast casserole, a proper hunt breakfast staple (see recipe at right).

as big as Rhode Island and my mother letting me have a sip from a pewter cup.

For Granny Hahn, the rules of a good hunt breakfast were to be rigidly adhered to:

Do not put too much paprika in the deviled eggs.

You must have at least one seven-layer salad.

Do not carve the roast beef ahead of time, but do serve some type of poultry.

Never try to outdo a Marylander when it

RITA MAE BROWN is the author of *Rubyfruit Jungle* (Daughters Press, 1973) and many other books. Her last article for *SAVEUR* was "Going to the Dogs" (October 2010).

comes to crab dishes. Best to leave that to them as it gives you another reason to attend those grand Maryland hunts.

Put the sherry and hard liquors in crystal decanters.

Pretend not to notice if a lady takes a stiff drink. Should she take two in rapid succession, notify her best friend. Under no circumstances do you notify her husband.

If you wish to use a stuffed fox as part of your display, make certain no cats are present.

Granny believed a proper hunt breakfast necessary to weaken men. I never knew Granny in her youth; she was born in the mid-1870s. But according to family gossip,

she was highly successful in this endeavor.

Listening to this elegant lady detail those courtesies she felt necessary for a wonderful life, I learned about hunt history, and history in general. Hunting, she said, gave General Washington respite and kept that magnificent body of his strong. He followed his own pack of hounds, rode out at daybreak, and returned to breakfasts organized with care: cornbread, feather-light biscuits, capons smothered in raisin sauce, lemon tarts. His table was known for its delicacies. For visitors from Europe, this was a sign those of us in the colonies were really not the stupid barbarians they thought we were.

Still, said Granny, those hunts paled in comparison with the 19 days organized by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, in July 1575. Morning hunts, masques, feasts, and dancing filled the weeks in this beautiful part of England's East Midlands. Queen Elizabeth I rode everyone into the ground. According to Granny it was the greatest party of all time—even better than the Field of the Cloth of Gold. This observation was always followed

Sausage and Cheddar Breakfast Casserole

SERVES 8-10

This simple but satisfying breakfast casserole (pictured left) was a favorite at hunt breakfasts hosted by author Rita Mae Brown's great-grandmother, Valentina Buckingham Hahn.

- 1 tbsp. unsalted butter, for greasing
- 6 slices white bread
- 1 lb. bulk breakfast sausage, casing removed
- 10 oz. grated cheddar cheese
- 2 cups milk
- ½ tsp. dry mustard
- 6 eggs, lightly beaten
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Heat oven to 350°. Grease a 9" x 13" baking dish with butter. Lay bread slices, overlapping slightly, over bottom of dish. Heat a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add sausage; cook, stirring and breaking up meat into large crumbles until browned, 5-7 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer sausage to dish and arrange over bread. Sprinkle half the cheese over sausage. Whisk milk, mustard, eggs, salt, and pepper in a bowl; pour milk mixture over sausage and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Cover dish with foil and set aside 10 minutes. Bake, covered, until eggs are set, about 30 minutes. Turn oven to broil. Uncover casserole and cook until cheese is browned, about 3 minutes.



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Photographs from the hunt and hunt breakfast of the Oak Ridge Hunt Club, where the author, Rita Mae Brown, is a member. The hunt took place at Oak Ridge Estate in Arrington, Virginia, in November 2012. Top row, from left: Gwynne Downey enjoys a mimosa; Page Turner on her mount; club member Jim Finn. Middle row: foxhounds await the start of the hunt; Dee Phillips, the whipper-in who helps handle the hounds; Steve and Gwynne Downey. Bottom row: the author, Rita Mae Brown, the event's huntsman; hunters following the fox's trail; Susan Migliore at the hunt breakfast.

by, "No one even knows how to do that anymore." This magical soiree, she insisted, had even inspired Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

How natural that hunting, feasting, partying should inspire literature. When else is one so free from the squalid little cares of the day, whatever the century? Of course, there was

stratification, but often with a cloth thrown over grass for an outdoor celebration, people were not so picky about who was who and exactly where everyone sat. Even royalty relaxes sometimes, and hunting allowed many a king and queen an escape from politics, and from family squabbles, too.

By General Washington's time, the hunt

breakfast in Europe had hardened into a strict class ritual. America took a different tack. Of course, some hunts were rich, and some still are, but many hunts were not attended by people privileged with centuries of inherited wealth. You couldn't buy your way over a fence, Granny Hahn noted; even the richest person in the county on the best

horse still had to know how to fly over the obstacle. What mattered was whether you could ride, not how much money you had.

Today, as in Granny's time, a hunt breakfast might be served on a trestle table if no grand home is available. At such outdoor breakfasts, even the horses and hounds attend, if they don't exactly sit at the table. The hounds eat in the kennel, and the horses munch on their feed bags and there's usually a large tub full of carrots for them. My grandfather gave each hound a shot of whiskey after a hard hunt. He had a reputation for great hounds and, loving them as he did, he always tested the whiskey first for purity. Granny made certain to test before he did.

Though she loved these impromptu breakfasts as much as the grand affairs, Granny Hahn could never bring herself to serve a Brunswick stew off the back of a well-used pickup truck. No matter where or when the hunt took place, she always had a set table.

Tough as Granny could be about what was proper, I am grateful. She wanted things done to bring people together, to create harmony, and in her defense, she was not a snob. If you could do something useful in life, she liked you. If you rode well, she adored you.

For Granny, feeding others was not just

a form of hospitality but a form of respect. Anyone who hunted, groomed, walked puppies in the summer, anyone even tangentially involved in the hunt was welcome at her table. And if unexpected guests came along, she beamed, announcing, "My tablecloth is rubber. It will stretch to feed a few more."

Her age was irrelevant to her or me, her horse always perfectly groomed. She taught me to cast aside dreary quotidian cares and let it rip.

Granny Hahn could never bring herself to serve a Brunswick stew off the back of a pickup truck; she always had a set table

That formidable lady left us in the early 1960s, riding to the end but no longer jumping much. Or at least, not jumping when her children were looking. Granny was fearless. In her later years, often as the oldest person in the field, men in their prime struggled to keep up with her, trailing after her like a line of ducklings. In retrospect, I know that my attractive, athletic great-grandmother, life circumscribed by class and gender, found purpose and release in fox hunting and everything related to it—nothing more so

than those fine breakfasts.

It's there I remember Granny Hahn most vividly, at a table like the grand one that followed last November's opening hunt at the Oak Ridge Estate in Arrington, in central Virginia, where I'm the huntsman. It's my job to care for the horses and hounds after the hunt, so by the time I made it to the table, people were cleaned up and digging in. (Virginians are still more than capable of serving a Dijon-glazed ham with cloves, brown sugar, and sometimes a bit of spirits in the glaze.) Mimosas and bloody marys flowed freely. Everyone's blood was up, and war stories abounded, as well as too much flirtation. I thought of Granny's insistence on what was proper and the care that she put into her breakfasts.

From riding with her, I learned to face danger with aplomb. From breakfasting with her, I learned kindness. She often advised me, "Do it now, you're going to be dead a long time." As I am close to the age she was when I first truly remember her, this has resonance.

She also quoted from *Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour*, an 1853 novel: "Women never look so well as when one comes in wet and dirty from hunting." Quite so. 🐾

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ROUTES

Upper Crust

The culinary glory of Michigan's Route 41

BY JANE AND MICHAEL STERN

BY THE SHORES OF Gitche Gumee, by the shining Big-Sea-Water," Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote in *The Song of Hiawatha*. We recalled that epic poem last October as we drove beside that same Big-Sea-Water—the Chippewa moniker for Lake Superior. We were wending our way up Michigan's Upper Peninsula on U.S. Highway 41 through a blaze of autumn leaves toward the highway's terminus at Copper Harbor.

Longfellow's *Hiawatha* came here to fast, but we had come to feast on the region's unique road foods. One sign that we were in the right place? The prevalence on myriad tavern and café menus of the Cornish pasty (pronounced PASS-tee). The emblematic regional food—an all-in-one meal of beef, potatoes, rutabagas, and onion that's baked inside a crimped half-circle pastry pocket—is a legacy of mid-19th-century British settlers who flocked here to work the iron and copper mines. While ore mining is history in these parts, locals remain fiercely loyal to pasties, which are far more common than even hamburgers.

Marquette's Crossroads Lounge

SAVEUR contributing editors
JANE and MICHAEL STERN
are the authors of *Roadfood.com*.

Smoked whitefish and herring at Thill's Fish House in Marquette, Michigan.

Storemags.com



sells a guaranteed one-pounder made of pork and beef, but we found ourselves nearby at Jean Kay's Pasties & Subs, a tiny eatery with just a few tables and a big take-out trade. Sitting there, we watched as one customer picked up \$171.45 worth of pasties for his coworkers at a nearby auto mall, followed shortly by a woman who planned to ship a dozen to her homesick son in Mississippi.

The restaurant is named after Jean Kay Harsch, who opened a small bakery in Iron Mountain in 1975 with her husband and their son, Brian. The family sold that location in 1983, but Brian keeps his parents' traditions alive in the store he runs in Marquette. "We make our pasties the old-fashioned way—with suet," Brian explains. Given the pastry's origins as a portable lunch for miners, durability is a signal virtue, and the beef fat helps the crusts stay flaky.

Our next stop, just a mile and a half away, was Thill's Fish House, where we went to exalt in one of the best offerings of the Upper Peninsula: fresh fish. This water-side seafood market is family run; the first generation of Thills came to the area half a century ago, and various Thills have been supplying local restaurants with fresh fish ever since. Inside, it smelled deeply of smoke and brine, and on offer were handsome hunks of smoked lake trout, walleye, smelt, and whitefish, all of which just about melt on the tongue. If you can hold out, have the staffers wrap up some slices in white paper—they're perfect for a picnic or, in our case, a road trip.

Fish in the backseat, we headed west on 41 to the old mining town of Ishpeming for a visit to Lawry's Pasty Shop. The cinder block shack has a fluorescent No-Doz ambience, pour-your-own coffee, and a neon "open" sign that blinks on at 7 A.M. Traditional pasties, made using Madelyne Lawry's original recipe, are hefty hand-formed crescents of tender crust loaded

Clockwise from top: monks outside their monastery's bakery, Jampot, in Eagle Harbor; Matt Shultz with one-pound pasties at Crossroads Lounge in Marquette; *povitica*, Croatian walnut swirl bread, from Toni's Country Kitchen in Laurium (see page 40 for recipe).

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with beef and vegetables reminiscent of a portable pot pie. A sign on the cash register admonishes: “It’s Not PAY-STREE...It’s Not PAY-STEES...IT’S PASS-TEE!!! YOOPER FOOD OF DA GODS!”

“Yooper,” derived from U.P. (Upper Peninsula), is the local term for a full-time resident. It also describes the in-your-face bumpkin pride that pervades the region as you travel into the forestland of the Northwest. On the roadside in Ishpeming, a raffish enterprise named Da Yoopers Tourist Trap & Museum sports a sign that reads: “Welcome to Yooperland. Relax—Enjoy—Spend All Your Ca\$h. But Please Don’t Move up Here.” Outdoor museum displays include the world’s largest working rifle and a 23-foot-long chain saw. Inside you can buy a glossary of the “Yoopenese language” (e.g., *No Hunting* means “Shoot This Sign”).

A visit is enough to rev you up for a big Yooper meal, and our next stop had us veering north along the Keweenaw Bay to a land that seems ever more remote and separate from the rest of the United States. Indeed, when we sat down at Suomi Home Bakery and Restaurant in the town of Houghton, we really did wonder if everyone in the big bakery-café was speaking a foreign language. It took a few moments to recognize their tongue as English; Yooper English is a curious blend that sounds Finnish, German, and Canadian all at once, and it’s especially strong northwest of Marquette.

In fact, there are more people of Finnish descent in the U.P. than anywhere else outside of Europe, so the Suomi menu’s headline of “*Tervetuloa!* Welcome!” and its bilingual listings are hardly affectations. You can get familiar *voileipiä* (sandwiches) for lunch and rice pudding for *jälkiruoka* (dessert), but we recommend *aamiainen* (breakfast), served all day, for which braided *nisu*—or wheat—bread

perfumed with cardamom is made into Finnish French toast, and *pannukakku* is the star attraction. The waiter described it as a Finnish pancake, but we found it to be more like a crustless egg custard pie—sweet, creamy, fundamental. One large cake is about a half-inch thick and is served in four-by-four-inch squares with a side of warm raspberry sauce.

One of the best tips we got on this trip came from a customer at Suomi who told us that his wife used to make *nisu* and saffron bread at home until they discovered Toni’s Country Kitchen up in Laurium. What a find! As we entered the one-room diner, which buzzed with chatter, we looked left into a kitchen where bakers were rolling dough on a floured table and another woman



was forearm-deep in a pan of ingredients, hand-mixing pasty filling. Toni’s pasty is a beaut, its crust fine, light, and savory, the rutabaga and potato sliced wafer-thin, the hunky beef shot through with sweet onion flavor. For dessert, we munched on some lovely sticky buns and cinnamon-bread French toast, but the real knockout was the nut-rich *povitica*. The name for this babka-like loaf comes from the Croatian word for “swaddled” and indeed, swaddled by fluffy bread in each slice was a buttery swirl of cinnamon-walnut filling. It put run-of-the-mill cinnamon breads to shame, and we packed some to go.

Our goal as we headed ever northward and approached the end of Highway 41 was Jampot, a fairy-tale hut in the Eagle Harbor forest where monks of the

Society of St. John make and sell breads, muffins, cookies, and jam. Simply stepping out of the car in the parking lot by Jampot can be a religious experience, thanks to the warm smells of baking bread and sourdough cakes filled with fruits marinated in wine and rum. We grabbed a banana-walnut bread packed with blueberries, a bag of molasses-rich gingerbread cookies, and a lemon-frosted pumpkin muffin, then drove to a nearby snacking spot overlooking beautiful Lake Medora, just five miles short of Copper Harbor. Gazing at the opposite shore, where autumn trees were perfectly mirrored on the blue waters, we were thankful our teachers had made us read all of that lengthy *Song of Hiawatha*. We thought of the last canto, of the lines that read:

Bright above him shone the heavens,

Level spread the lake before him;

From its bosom leaped the sturgeon,

Sparkling, flashing in the sunshine;
On its margin the great forest
Stood reflected in the water,
Every tree-top had its shadow,
Motionless beneath the water.

We saw no sturgeon, but otherwise, there we were with *Hiawatha*. Not so bad with a slice of *povitica* in hand. 🐉

Crossroads Lounge 900 County Road 480, Marquette (906/249-8912). **Da Yoopers Tourist Trap & Museum** 490 North Steel Street, Ishpeming (800/628-9978; dayoopers.com). **Jampot** 6500 State Highway M26, Eagle Harbor (no phone; societyofstjohn.com). **Jean Kay’s Pasties & Subs** 1635 Presque Isle, Marquette (906/228-5310; jeankayspasties.com). **Lawry’s Pasty Shop** 2381 U.S. 41, Ishpeming (906/485-5589; lawrys-pasties.com). **Suomi Home Bakery and Restaurant** 54 Huron Street, Houghton (906/482-3220). **Thill’s Fish House** 250 East Main Street, Marquette (906/226-9851; greatlakeswhitefish.com). **Toni’s Country Kitchen** 79 Third Street, Laurium (906/337-0611).

Povitica

(Croatian Walnut Swirl Bread)

SERVES 8–10

Sweet walnut paste is rolled into yeast dough in this recipe (pictured on page 38) adapted from the one at Toni’s Country Kitchen in Laurium, Michigan.

For the dough:

- 1 ¼-oz. package active dry yeast
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¾ cup milk, heated to 115°
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted, plus more
- 1 egg
- 2 ½ cups flour, plus more

For the filling:

- 1 cup walnut halves, toasted
- ½ cup sugar
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 egg whites

1 Make the dough: Combine yeast, 1 tbsp. sugar, and half the milk in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment; let sit until foamy, about 10 minutes. Add remaining sugar and milk, plus salt, butter, and egg; blend. With the motor running, slowly add flour; beat until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap; set in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

2 Make the filling: Purée walnuts, sugar, butter, milk, and cinnamon in a food processor into a smooth paste. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form; fold in walnut paste.

3 Grease a 9" x 5" x 2 ¾" loaf pan with butter. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 10" x 4' long oval about ¼" thick. Spread dough with walnut mixture. Starting from one narrow end, roll dough into a tight cylinder. Trim ends and transfer to pan; set in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

4 Heat oven to 350°. Bake until a toothpick inserted in middle comes out clean, about 1 hour. Let cool.

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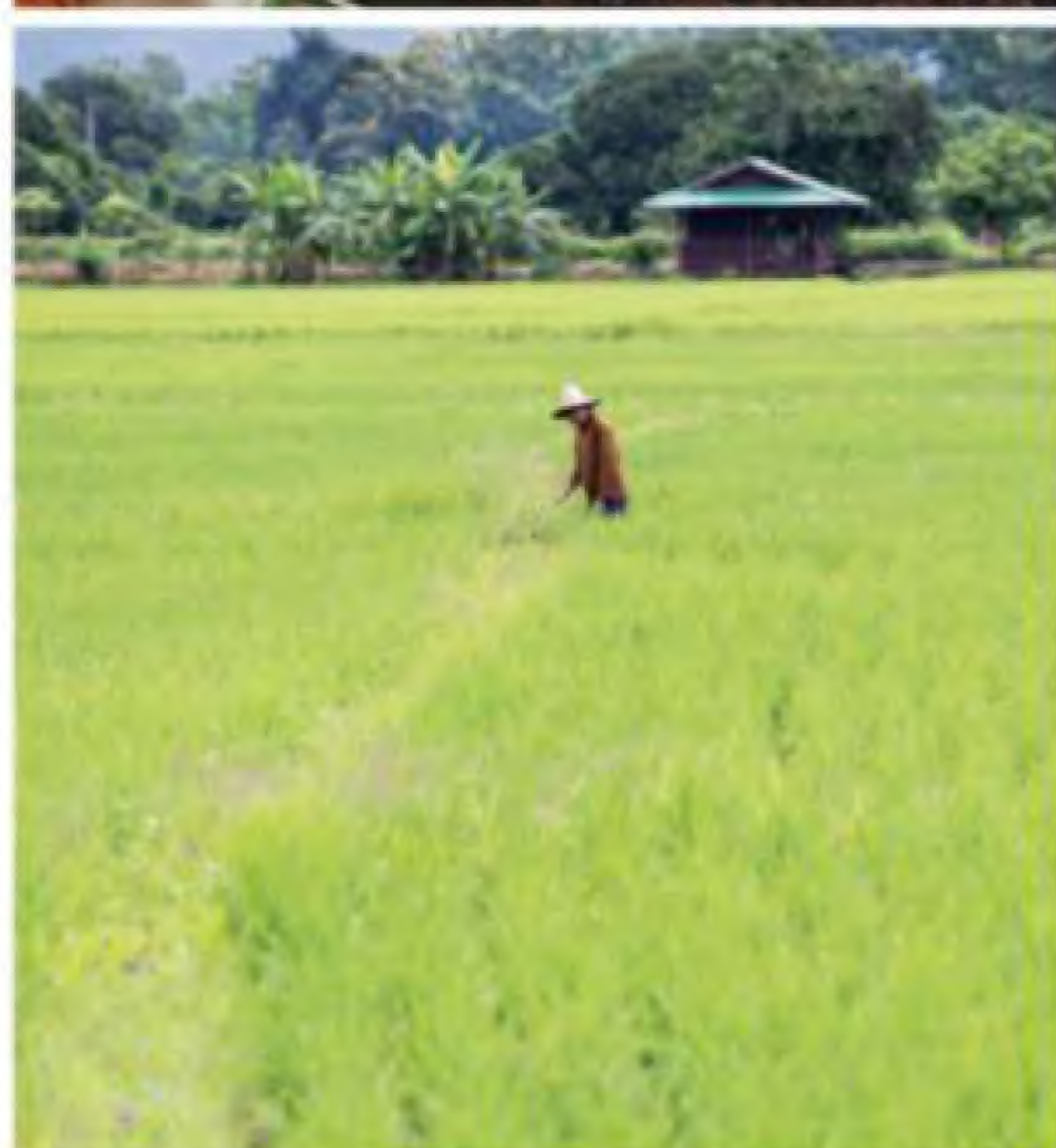
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The Star of Siam

BY ANDY RICKER

When I first went to Thailand in the 1980s, I found out that curries there aren't at all like the heavy, busy ones I knew from Thai restaurants in the U.S. In Thailand, curries are far more diverse; there are scores of regional versions. And there are classic curries like the ones in the following recipes—sour curry, tart with tamarind; coconut milk-enriched yellow curry, and green curry blazing with fresh chiles; fiery red curry that's sometimes cooked dry, almost like a stir-fry. Thai curries might be hot, but they are balanced, with sweet, tangy, pungent, and aromatic notes. They're also more spare because they're not meant to be one-pot meals. Rather, they're the sauce that flavors rice. But what a sauce it is. The Thai call curries *kaeng*, which refers to foods that start with a paste, a smooth-ground, fragrant mixture of chiles, rhizomes, shrimp paste, herbs, and spices. The ingredients might seem disparate, but when you make one of the curries in these recipes, you discover that, through careful cooking, they come together into something delicious. It's not really difficult to make curries from scratch, but it takes patience. In Thai Buddhism, there's a word, *sati*. It means mindfulness. That's what making a curry takes.

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TOP ROW, FROM LEFT: PENNY DE LOS SANTOS; BOYER/ROGER VIOLLET/GETTY IMAGES; SECOND ROW: JAMES OSELAND; PENNY DE LOS SANTOS (2). THIRD ROW: AUSTIN BUSH; PENNY DE LOS SANTOS; DRAZEN VUKELIC/GETTY IMAGES; FOURTH ROW: PENNY DE LOS SANTOS (2)

Top row, from left: green curry with fish balls and eggplant; the Thai royal family in 1930; chiles in Meuang Mai market in Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. Second row, from left: curry pastes in a Bangkok market in southern Thailand; Kaffir lime; red curry with pork belly and green beans. Third row, from left: rice fields near Chiang Mai; sour curry with shrimp; the day's offerings at a *raan khao kaeng*, or curry shop. Bottom row, from left: dried Thai chiles, used in curry pastes; yellow curry with beef and potatoes. Recipes start on page 44.



Fit for a King While regular folks ate rustic meals, around the 14th century cooks in the royal kitchens of Thailand began using elaborate techniques and imported ingredients. Royal cooking—exemplified by rich, complex curries like *kaeng kàrii*, made with pricey Indian spices—had a profound influence on the development of Thai cuisine as a whole.



Palm Sugar (*naam taan pip*), derived from palm tree sap, adds a nutty, slightly fermented-tasting sweetness to curries. It's sold in hard cakes, so I usually throw it into the microwave for 30 seconds to soften it before grating.



Shrimp paste (*kapi*), made from tiny salted, fermented, and sun-dried crustaceans, adds a distinctive pungency to curries. Look for Thai brands, like Trachang, which are more moist and aromatic than those from other countries.

• **Kaeng Kàrii** Yellow Curry with Beef and Potatoes

To the Thai, *kàrii* means “curry powder,” an ingredient not usually found in Thai cooking. Curry powder and other dried spices like turmeric traveled to Thailand along the spice route. The dried spices in this complex, coconut-enriched curry reveal the recipe's South Asian origins. Thai cooks like to experiment. Over the centuries, they've absorbed Indian spices, Chinese techniques, and Western ingredients like chiles. At Pok Pok, my restaurants in Portland, Oregon, and New York City, we care about accuracy, but we're not slavish about it. For instance, this recipe calls for beef chuck; it's more tender than the cuts of beef Thai cooks might use, and in proportion to the sauce, we'd serve a lot more of the meat than the Thai ever would. These are some ways that we make the recipes our own, which is totally in the spirit of Thai cooking. An approach like this teaches you about the food; you start to understand what happens if you add ten chiles instead of five, more palm sugar or less. So here's my advice: Follow the recipe exactly the first time, then adjust the seasonings and the coconut milk. Put your stamp on it. After all, that's what the Thai do. (See page 100 for information on hard-to-find ingredients.)

SERVES 8-10

For the paste:

- 6 small Asian shallots or 2 medium regular shallots, unpeeled
- 2 small heads garlic, unpeeled
- 1 3"-piece galangal, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 2"-piece ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 tsp. coriander seeds
- 20 dried red Thai chiles or chiles de árbol, stemmed and roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp. ground turmeric
- 2 tbsp. mild curry powder
- 2 tbsp. roughly chopped cilantro root or stems
- 2 tbsp. shrimp paste, preferably Trachang brand
- 1½ tbsp. kosher salt
- 6 stalks lemongrass, trimmed and thinly sliced

For the curry:

- 1½ lb. beef chuck, trimmed and cut into 2" strips about ½" thick
- 3 cups coconut milk, preferably UHT from a carton
- 1 cup coconut cream, preferably UHT from a carton
- 10 small Asian shallots, halved, or 3 medium regular shallots, quartered
- 3 large Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1½" pieces
- 2 tbsp. grated palm sugar
- 1 tbsp. fish sauce, preferably Tiparos brand
- Cooked jasmine rice, for serving

1 Make the paste: Heat a 12" cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Place shallots and garlic on a piece of foil and fold into a tight package; add to pan. Cook, flipping once, until soft, about 25 minutes. Let cool, then peel and roughly chop; set aside. Place galangal and ginger in a single layer on a piece of foil and fold into a flat package; add to pan. Cook, flipping once, until soft, about 7 minutes; set aside. Heat coriander seeds in pan until seeds begin to pop, 1-2 minutes; let cool slightly. Place in a spice grinder and pulse until finely ground; set aside.

2 Place chiles in a bowl and cover with 2 cups boiling water; let sit until soft, about 15 minutes. Drain, reserving 2 tbsp. liquid. Place chiles in a small food processor with shallots, garlic, galangal, ginger, coriander, turmeric, curry powder, cilantro root, shrimp paste, salt, and lemongrass; pulse until roughly chopped. Add reserved liquid; purée until smooth. Set 1 cup aside; refrigerate remaining paste for future use up to 2 weeks.

3 Make the curry: Bring beef and coconut milk to a simmer in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until beef is very tender, about 1 hour. Using a slotted spoon, transfer beef to a bowl and reserve 1½ cups coconut milk; set beef and coconut milk aside.

4 Heat coconut cream in a 6-qt. saucepan or 13" wok over medium heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until

oil is separated, about 30 minutes. Add the 1 cup curry paste; cook, stirring, until slightly browned, about 7 minutes. Add reserved coconut milk to pan along with 3 cups water; bring to a boil. Add reserved beef, plus shallots and potatoes. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are very tender, about 40 minutes. Stir in palm sugar and fish sauce. Serve with jasmine rice on the side.



Perfect White Rice In central and southern Thailand, people eat curries with loads of jasmine rice. To them, the rice isn't just a side dish; its floral aroma, earthy taste, and soft bite are the heart of a meal. It's important, then, to make the rice correctly; you want grains that are fluffy, moist, and distinct, not sticky. For perfect jasmine or any long-grain white rice, follow these steps: **①** Place 2 cups rice in a 2-qt. saucepan; cover with cold water by about 2 inches. Using your fingers, swirl rice around until the water becomes cloudy. Drain the starchy water from the rice, using your hand to catch any escaping grains. Repeat twice more or until water runs clear. **②** Add 2½ cups water; bring rice to a rolling boil and cook for 15 seconds. Immediately reduce heat to the lowest setting and cover the pot. Set a timer for 15 minutes and don't open the lid. Remove from the heat and let sit, covered, for 10 minutes so rice can continue to steam. **③** Uncover and fluff with a fork.



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Currying Favor Though monks eat simply day to day, an ornate cuisine of devotion thrived in the 19th century. To reflect their love of Buddha, followers prepared opulent feasts, including curries, for monks. Today monks invited to bless the guests at celebrations are often fed green curry by their hosts, who earn good karma for the gift.



Galangal (*kha*), a pale-skinned cousin of ginger, is a Thai staple. I slice it fresh for green curry and roast it lightly to bring out its aroma for yellow curry. It lends lovely citrus and mustardlike notes.



Green Thai Chiles (*phrik khii nuu*)—the fresh, unripe version of a finger-sized variety that we call bird's-eye, or bird, chiles—give green curry its name. Floral and sharp-tasting, they are also super hot. For milder curry, remove their capsaicin-rich seeds and ribs.

• **Kaeng Khiaw Waan** Green Curry with Fish and Eggplant

Every region of Thailand has its version of *kaeng khiaw*, or green curry. On my first trip to the south, I ordered a green chicken curry that was so spicy, I initially had trouble eating it. But I also couldn't stop myself. It was creamy with coconut, fragrant with basil and lime leaf; I had never tasted anything so darned hot and yet so good. Then I realized that at the bottom of the bowl were half a dozen sliced green chiles, their heat fresh and potent. The dish gets its name from these intense little peppers, which get incorporated into the paste. In the south, where food is particularly spicy, fistfuls of them go into the finished dish. But green curry actually originated in central Thailand, where it's just as luscious and aromatic but milder. There you'll likely see it made with fish balls—these Thai-style dumplings add a nice, bouncy texture to the dish. You can make your own, which isn't hard, or buy fresh or frozen fish balls from an Asian grocery. (See page 100 for information on hard-to-find ingredients.)

SERVES 6–8

For the paste:

- 2 tsp. coriander seeds
- 1 tsp. yellow mustard seeds
- ½ tsp. cumin seeds
- 8 whole black peppercorns
- 2 tbsp. roughly chopped cilantro root or stems
- 2 tsp. shrimp paste, preferably Trachang brand
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. finely chopped Kaffir lime leaf
- 1 tsp. grated lime zest, preferably Kaffir
- 15 fresh green Thai chiles, stemmed and roughly chopped
- 8 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 6 small Asian shallots or 2 medium regular shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 stalks lemongrass, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1 3"-piece galangal, peeled and thinly sliced
- ¼ cup coconut milk, preferably UHT from a carton

For the fish balls:

- ½ lb. skinless, boneless tilapia filets, cut into ½" pieces
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 4 tsp. cornstarch
- ½ tsp. sugar
- ⅛ tsp. ground white pepper

For the curry:

- ½ cup coconut cream, preferably UHT from a carton
- 1½ cups coconut milk, preferably UHT from a carton
- 4 small Thai eggplants, quartered, or 1 small Japanese eggplant, cut into 1½" pieces
- 1 tbsp. fish sauce, preferably Tiparos brand
- 1 tbsp. grated palm sugar
- 12 fresh or frozen Kaffir lime leaves, roughly torn
- 3–4 fresh green Thai chiles, stemmed and halved
- ½ cup packed basil leaves, preferably Thai
- 2 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, and quartered
- Cooked jasmine rice, for serving

1 Make the paste: Heat coriander seeds, mustard seeds, cumin seeds, and peppercorns in a 12" cast-iron skillet until seeds begin to pop, 1–2 minutes; let cool slightly. Place in a spice grinder and pulse until finely ground; set aside.

2 Place cilantro root, shrimp paste, salt, lime leaf, lime zest, chiles, garlic, shallots, lemongrass, and galangal in a small food processor; pulse until roughly chopped. Add reserved spice mixture and the coconut milk; purée until smooth. Set ½ cup aside; refrigerate remaining paste for future use up to 2 weeks.

3 Make the fish balls: Pulse fish and ¾ tsp. salt in a food processor. With the motor running, slowly add 2 tbsp. water; process into a smooth paste. Add cornstarch, sugar, and white pepper; pulse until combined. Transfer paste to a bowl; refrigerate for 30 minutes.

4 Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Using wet hands, roll fish paste into 16 balls about 1"

thick. Cook, partially covered, until tender, 6–7 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer balls to a plate; let cool completely.

5 Make the curry: Heat coconut cream in a 6-qt. saucepan or 13" wok over medium heat; cook, stirring occasionally, until oil is separated, 8–10 minutes. Add the ½ cup curry paste; cook, stirring, until fragrant and slightly browned, about 4 minutes. Add coconut milk and 1 cup water; bring to a boil. Add fish balls and eggplant. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, until eggplant is tender, about 20 minutes. Stir in fish sauce, palm sugar, lime leaves, and chiles. Remove from heat and stir in basil. Serve with eggs and jasmine rice on the side.



Thai Table

If you want to eat curry as it's done in Thailand, don't dump a big bowl of the stuff over rice. Do the opposite: Serve a lot of rice with smaller portions of curry and other dishes. In Thailand, rice—the glutinous sticky kind in the north, fragrant jasmine elsewhere—equals sustenance. It's at the center of the table, surrounded by an assortment of *aahaan kap khao*, literally, "dishes served with rice," encompassing a balanced range of flavors. There might be a garlicky stir-fry, a clear soup, a spicy-sweet pickle, fresh herbs and raw vegetables along with a pungent dipping sauce, a fish somebody's fried, and, yes, a curry. These foods are eaten in a single course, primarily with spoons. Until the late 19th century when the royal family went to England and came back with utensils, Thai people ate with their hands. This is another reason rice is important; traditionally, the Thai used small pinches of rice to scoop up dollops of curry. They still treat curry like this, ladling just a few spoonfuls of it alongside the rice. That makes sense to me: Curries are intense, and they can be rich. It's more enjoyable to eat them a bit at a time.



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Helpful Reads Besides my own book, some others that teach about curries are Vatcharin Bhumichitr's guide to regional cooking, *The Taste of Thailand*; David Thompson's sweeping *Thai Food*, which puts the recipes in historical context; and Nancie McDermott's *Real Thai*, which makes the food accessible to U.S. home cooks.



Fish sauce (*nam pla*), made from fermented anchovies, adds salty and umami notes to curries. Make sure to use a Thai brand such as Tiparos; brinier, with a stronger aroma than Vietnamese versions, it balances the sweet palm sugar.



Tamarind (*makham*), a podlike fruit with more pucker than sweetness, gives some sour curries their tartness. It's sold in blocks of sticky pulp that you soften in hot water before using, or as a smooth, ready-to-use concentrate (shown) made from the strained juice.

★ **Kaeng Som Kung** Sour Curry with Shrimp

Curries aren't always creamy with coconut, and curry paste isn't always fried. One of the most common curries cooked in Thai homes, restaurants, and markets is *kaeng som*, a quick soup with a clean, sour flavor and absolutely no coconut or oil. The central Thai version in this recipe is made with nice big shrimp, and it's soured with concentrated tamarind juice. But I've tasted lots of variations on this curry, including ones soured with lemon or lime, and I've never had one I didn't like. Light, tangy, and cooked with a modest amount of heat and any available seafood and fresh vegetables, *kaeng som* is an elemental and satisfying dish, and it's an easy curry to master. This recipe kicks off with a basic paste enriched with raw shrimp and shrimp paste to boost its umami depth and add body to the simmering broth. Learning to make that broth, which leads with tart, pungent flavors but also delivers measured amounts of sweetness, salt, and spice, helps you understand the balance in Thai cooking. (See page 100 for information on hard-to-find ingredients.)

SERVES 6-8

For the paste:

- 30 dried red Thai chiles or chiles de árbol, stemmed and roughly chopped
- 8 oz. raw medium shrimp (about 10), peeled and deveined, tails removed, and roughly chopped
- ¼ cup shrimp paste, preferably Trachang brand
- 1 tbsp. kosher salt
- 8 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 6 small Asian shallots or 2 medium regular shallots, roughly chopped
- 1 4"-piece krachai, peeled and thinly sliced, or ¼ cup frozen, defrosted and roughly chopped

For the curry:

- 1 cup tamarind concentrate, preferably Thai Fruit brand
 - 1 tbsp. fish sauce, preferably Tiparos brand
 - 1 tbsp. grated palm sugar
 - ¼ lb. long beans or regular green beans, trimmed and cut into 2" pieces
 - 1 small chayote squash, cut into 2" pieces about ½" thick
 - 1 small daikon (about 7 oz.), peeled, halved lengthwise, and cut into ½"-thick slices
 - ¼ small Napa cabbage, sliced 2" thick
 - 8 oz. raw medium shrimp (about 10), peeled and deveined, tails removed
- Cooked jasmine rice, for serving

1 Make the paste: Place chiles in a bowl and cover with 2 cups boiling water; let sit until soft, about 15 minutes. Drain chiles, reserving ¼ cup liquid. Place chiles in a small food processor with raw shrimp, shrimp paste, salt, garlic, shallots, and krachai; pulse until roughly chopped. Add reserved liquid; purée until smooth. Set 1½ cups of paste aside; refrigerate remaining paste for future use up to 2 weeks.

2 Make the curry: Whisk the 1½ cups curry paste with tamarind, fish sauce, and palm sugar in a 4-qt. saucepan or 13" wok until smooth. Whisk in 4 cups water; bring to a boil. Add beans, chayote, daikon, and cabbage and reduce heat to medium; cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender, 20-25 minutes. Add shrimp; cook until shrimp are pink and cooked through, 1-2 minutes. Remove from heat and let curry sit 20-30 minutes for flavors to meld. Serve with jasmine rice on the side.





When Belgians think quick and delicious home cooking, mussels are always high on the list. Whether serving two people or twenty, mussels are inexpensive, easy and sure to please. Serve with home-made frites, or a big luscious salad and toasted garlic bread. Multiply the recipe for more appetizers or main courses.



MUSSELS WITH RARE VOS AND AIOLI

24 large P.E.I. mussels (cleaned)
1 750 ml. bottle Ommegang Rare Vos ale.
1 tbsp. coarsely chopped fresh thyme
1 cup coarsely chopped flat parsley
2 finely minced garlic cloves

PREPARATION

Clean mussels. Add Rare Vos to cover half. Add thyme & garlic. Cover & simmer until mussels open (3-5 mins). Throw out any that don't open. Drain. Remove top halves of shells, put a small dollop of aioli on each mussel. Sprinkle with parsley & serve.

AIOLI

6 egg yolks
6 oz. Rare Vos amber ale
 $\frac{1}{2}$ fresh lemon, juiced
2 cloves garlic & zest of one orange
12-14 oz. good quality olive oil
salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

AIOLI PREPARATION

Reduce Rare Vos by half and let cool. Place all ingredients except oil in food processor. Turn on and slowly drizzle in oil until sauce thickens. If too thick add a few drops of water to adjust.

Makes 4 generous appetizer portions.
Pair with well-chilled Rare Vos.



①



②



③



④



⑤



⑥



⑦



⑧



⑨

Cream of the Crop

Coconut milk and cream, key Thai ingredients, are made by straining grated coconut meat with water. The resulting liquid separates into milk—used to braise meats and finish curries—and the thicker, fattier cream for frying pastes. To use coconut cream like a cooking fat, you first have to do what is called “cracking” it; you have to heat it until the water evaporates and the oil separates from the proteins. The oil adds unctuousness, and when it rises to the top of a cooling curry, it acts as an anaerobic preservative, a benefit for Thai cooks, who prefer to serve curries at room temperature. Though freshly made milk and cream are unbeatable, they’re work to make, and good coconuts aren’t easy to find here. But some decent alternatives do exist. Carton-packed Thai brands like **Aroy-D**, which are ultra heat treated (UHT) so that they’re shelf-stable, crack easily and taste clean and fresh. And while emulsified canned creams can taste muted and take longer to separate, if you do use cans, **Mae Ploy** and **Savoy**, two Thai brands, are best.



Curry Cookware

To make a curry, you need to cut, grind, stir, and heat. There are a few tools I keep around to help me with those tasks; some are rustic, and some are more modern. Among them is a Thai-style charcoal ① **tao**, a rudimentary but reliable cement cooktop sometimes covered in galvanized metal and lined in clay. When used with a metal grate and clean-burning Japanese binchotan fuel, the **tao** pulls double duty as a grill, gently heating and amplifying the fragrance of galangal, garlic, and shallots. I toast spices in a ② **cast-iron skillet**, where their aromas really bloom; the skillet’s even heat also beautifully draws out the flavors of a dry curry. My favorite tool for making curry pastes is a traditional ③ **mortar and pestle**. I use one made of durable nonporous granite with a deep, round bowl that gives me ample room to crush fibrous ingredients into smooth pastes (see “Daily Grind,” page 52). If you don’t want to wrestle with one of those, an ④ **electric spice grinder** can pulverize seeds and peppercorns quickly, and a ⑤ **mini food processor** makes quick work of cilantro roots, Kaffir lime leaves, and other aromatics, instantly breaking them down for pastes. To “crack” the coconut cream, heating it to coax out its oils for frying the paste, I’ve found few tools better than a flat-bottomed Thai-style steel ⑥ **wok**. It doubles as a saucepan for cooking the assembled curry, which can also be finished in a standard four- to six-quart ⑦ **saucepan**. I use a shovel-like ⑧ **wok spatula** to scoop and stir the frying paste, as well as turn meats and vegetables in simmering curries, and since the most common knife-work called for in these recipes is to “roughly chop,” a sharp ⑨ **chef’s knife** is the only blade you really need.

INGALLS PHOTOGRAPHY (9); PENNY DE LOS SANTOS

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Curry in a Hurry All over Thailand, *raan khao kaeng*, curry shops, display rows of pots filled with all kinds of curries, usually made with prepared pastes that the shopkeeper has bought from his favorite vendors. You get a bowl of rice and point at what you want. It's a cheap, fast, tasty way to eat.



Krachai, a rod-shaped rhizome, can mainly be found frozen in the U.S., where you might also see it called Chinese ginger, Chinese keys, or finger root. It adds peppery and gingery notes to curries.



Shallots get added to curry pastes raw or grilled just until soft and fragrant. I seek out red shallots (*hom daeng*), the variety used in Thailand; they're smaller and sweeter, with a more concentrated flavor than the ones we normally cook with in the States.

❖ **Phat Phrik Khing Muu** Red Curry with Pork Belly and Green Beans

In rural Thailand kids learn how to make curry paste at a young age, sitting on the ground with their legs wrapped around the mortar and pestle. My friend Sunny Chailert, who taught me much of what I know about Thai cooking, told me that his mom never said, "Here's how to do it." She'd just say, "Make the curry paste." He'd do it and fail, do it and fail, until she liked it. This recipe, adapted from one in David Thompson's *Thai Food* (Ten Speed Press, 2002), benefits from that kind of attention. It belongs to a category of curries called *phat phrik khing*, "dry curry"; it's caramelized in pork fat rather than cracked coconut cream, and there's no coconut milk added to make a gravy. This means it's all about the paste, bright red and blistering from a load of dried chiles. Without coconut to soften them out, the flavors of the paste—citrusy lemongrass, gingery krachai, briny shrimp—are more pronounced. Beginning with a fresh, well-balanced paste, and then paying close attention so it doesn't burn, are definitely key. And while American cooks might find it counterintuitive to plunge pork belly into hot water, boiling and then browning the fatty meat gives it an excellent texture: crispy outside, soft within. (See page 100 for information on hard-to-find ingredients.)

SERVES 4-6

For the paste:

- 12 dried puya chiles, stemmed and roughly chopped
- 8 dried red Thai chiles or chiles de árbol, stemmed and roughly chopped
- 1/3 cup small dried shrimp, rinsed and drained
- 2 tbsp. roughly chopped cilantro root or stems
- 1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 8 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 6 small Asian shallots or 2 medium regular shallots, roughly chopped
- 6 stalks lemongrass, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1 4"-piece krachai, peeled and thinly sliced, or 1/4 cup frozen, defrosted and roughly chopped
- 1 2"-piece galangal, peeled and thinly sliced

For the curry:

- 1/2 lb. skin-on pork belly
- 3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 1 tbsp. fish sauce, preferably Tiparos brand
- 1 1/2 tsp. pickled green peppercorns, lightly crushed
- 3/4 tsp. grated palm sugar
- 5 fresh or frozen Kaffir lime leaves, roughly torn
- 6 fresh green Thai chiles, stemmed and halved
- 1 3"-piece krachai, peeled and grated, or 3 tbsp. frozen, defrosted and roughly chopped
- 1/2 lb. long beans or regular green beans, trimmed and cut into 2" pieces
- 1 cup packed basil leaves, preferably Thai
- Cooked jasmine rice, for serving

1 Make the paste: Place chiles in a bowl and cover with 2 cups boiling water; let sit until soft, about 15 minutes. Drain chiles, reserving 5 tbsp. liquid. Place chiles in a small food processor with dried shrimp, cilantro root, salt, garlic, shallots, lemongrass, krachai, and galangal; pulse until roughly chopped. Add reserved liquid; purée until smooth. Set 1/2 cup aside; refrigerate remaining paste for future use up to 2 weeks.

2 Make the curry: Bring pork and 6 cups water to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan over high heat. Cook until pork is tender, about 45 minutes. Transfer pork to an ice bath. Drain, dry completely, and discard skin; cut pork into 1" pieces about 1/2" thick and set aside.

3 Heat a 12" skillet or 13" wok over medium-high heat and add pork pieces. Cook, turning as needed, until browned on all sides and fat is rendered, about 12 minutes. Add garlic; cook until beginning to brown, 1-2 minutes. Stir in the 1/2 cup curry paste; cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1-2 minutes. Add fish sauce, peppercorns, palm sugar, lime leaves, chiles, krachai, and 2/3 cup water; bring to a boil. Add beans; cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in basil. Serve with jasmine rice on the side.



Daily Grind A food processor helps curry paste preparation go quickly, but when I was testing recipes for my cookbook, I used a mortar and pestle like old-school Thai cooks do. The payoff is in a superior paste. Food processors chop rather than grind; to work really well, they need added liquid, which dilutes flavors, and the resulting purée lacks the textural heft of a hand-ground paste. They also heat up as their blades spin, which can change flavors. Still, a mortar and pestle requires some technique. Here's how I use one: For stability, I place the mortar on a folded towel and position it not in the bouncy center of the table but over a supporting leg. I grind the chiles first, cutting them into pieces small enough to crush but not so tiny that they splatter when pounded. **①** I add salt; it abrades the chiles and helps break them down. **②** I keep my wrist loose, and let the weight of the pestle do the work for me, pounding in the mortar's center and using the sides to scrape and grind. I add the remaining ingredients one at a time, from hardest to softest. As the mortar fills with paste, I remove some of it to keep it from splashing and to make room for more ingredients, then I blend it in at the end. **③** Once I've scooped out the completed paste, I rinse the residue from the mortar with warm coconut milk or broth and add that to the curry.



RARE GRILL

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Pucker Up

Artisan sauerkrauts pack a punch of bright flavor

BY KAREN SHIMIZU

I WAS NEVER crazy about kraut, but one evening, as I wandered through the aisles of my Brooklyn co-op market, a jar stopped me in my tracks. It didn't look like any sauerkraut I'd ever seen—the glass practically glowed with ruby shreds of pickled red cabbage. Intrigued, I tossed it in my basket. Once home, I grabbed a fork and took a bite. It was bracingly tart and unexpectedly crisp, with a lively, almost effervescent zip. It bore no resemblance to the lifeless, soggy stuff I'd known before. I kept eating, dreaming of the fish tacos, dumplings, and bigos I could top with the snappy crimson tendrils. I called the producer to see what else they made.

A few days later, a carton loaded with jars arrived from Hawthorne Valley, a biodynamic farm and agricultural education center in upstate New York. I opened the box and began tasting: pungent shredded carrot, onion, and ginger; a canary yellow cabbage with finely diced turmeric root and warm cumin-y notes; a meaty-tasting kraut with juniper and caraway seeds that begged to be piled on a Reuben; and a straightforward cabbage and sea salt version that packed an eyebrow-raising tang. All the flavors sparkled, vivid and intense.

What made them so good? The process is simple: Cabbage is sliced, salted, and allowed to fer-

ment along with carrot or onion or other seasonings. The microbes that live on its leaves proliferate, transforming it, until ultimately lactobacilli acidify the cabbage, giving it sauerkraut's characteristic tartness and preventing spoilage. At this point, most commercial sauerkrauts are pasteurized, which produces a shelf-stable product, but also kills the probiotic bacteria, mutes the vibrant flavors, and softens the firm texture. The secret to Hawthorne Valley's exceptional handmade creations is that they aren't heat-treated, so the enzymes and microbes are still thriving when they leave the farm—al dente bite and lip-smacking pucker preserved.

Since that fateful evening, I've had a sauerkraut renaissance. I use Hawthorne Valley's krauts in cooked dishes, stuffed into pierogies and simmered in choucroute garnie, where its crisp acidity balances the richness of the meats. But I love it best raw: the ginger carrot version tossed into salads; the caraway seed one on sandwiches; curry kraut nibbled like a pickle with rice; and the cool, crunchy plain style heaped on all sorts of grilled sausages. Finally, when the jars are nearly empty, I pour the remaining juice into a bloody mary. Hawthorne Valley Sauerkraut is \$5 for a 15-ounce jar at hawthornevalleyassociation.org (price subject to change).

MICHAEL KRAUS

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LUNCH AT YOUR LEISURE

In Buenos Aires, lunch is rarely a grab-and-go affair; it's an hours-long paean to everyday pleasures, both culinary and conversational



Patrons linger around the lunch counter at Pepe's, a popular cafeteria in downtown Buenos Aires.

BY DAVID SAX
PHOTOGRAPHS
BY LANDON
NORDEMAN





TEN YEARS AGO, FRESHLY graduated from university with a history degree and therefore hopelessly unemployed, I left my parents' house in Toronto and moved to Buenos Aires on a whim. I was 23 and wanted to be a foreign correspondent. Argentina was recovering from a massive economic collapse and a pivotal presidential election—the first since the riots that had toppled five successive governments in the span of a few weeks—which meant I could probably sell a few stories to some Canadian newspapers back home.

I arrived in the thick of the turmoil but quickly fell into the rhythms of the city. I loved the architecture, a mixture of Belle Époque buildings and sweaty concrete apartment blocks. And I adored the food, heavily Italian-influenced, but with Spanish flavors, South American ingredients, and an Argentine cattleman's helping of beef. There were storefront pizzerias serving thick slices of cheesy pies and baked empanadas, and grand steak houses, called *parrillas*, on virtually every block. Street vendors spread along the city's riverfront offered delicious dark red pork and beef sausages, their casings crisp from hot embers, split and stuffed into crusty white buns with liberal spoonfuls of herb-packed chimichurri and peppery salsa *criolla*.

My biggest discovery, however, wasn't so much a single victual as an entire meal: namely lunch. A window into the city's diverse culinary history, with its European and Latin accents, lunch is Buenos Aires' main event—a meal unfolding between a tiny breakfast and a dinner that happens 10 to 12 hours later. It seemed each interview I did for the newspapers, be it with a pollster, a journalist, or a professor, involved a multicourse, wine-soaked marathon of politics, economics, and gossip. These were lunches like the ones I'd read about in books and thought belonged to a bygone era, a culinary act of derring-do once partaken of by decadent writers like Ernest Hemingway and insatiable corporate titans.

Sometimes the meals were upscale, a parade of endless dishes served to us reverently by tuxedo-clad waiters. Others were more low-key: a couple beef empanadas and a slice of flan eaten at a picnic table, or a relaxed sit-down lunch at El Renaciente, a lovingly worn-down spot near my apartment in Palermo. There, my companions and I would dine on rice and veal covered in a garlicky, winey sauce smothered in onions, peppers, and tomatoes that we'd wash down with cheap red wine cut with seltzer. Other days I'd find myself at *asados*—grilled feasts in backyards attended by friends and family—where thick cuts of charbroiled meat would be accompanied

by refined sides like smoky mushroom caps stuffed with crumbled chorizo and cooked slowly over the *parrilla* grill until they became almost creamy in texture. No matter the locale, the lunches went on for hours, as diners savored the food and the pleasure of one another's company.

I learned that when I wanted to get actual writing done, I had to forgo my food marathons and pop into Pepe's, a cafeteria downtown where the baked ham, egg, and tomato pie was cheap and filling. (Alas, sometimes even there I'd find myself lured into hours-long conversations at the lunch counter.)

Allegedly I was there covering politics. In reality, I'd become a lunch correspondent. I found myself filling notebooks with quotes on the state of the nation as I gorged, surreptitiously observing the ritual pacing of the meal from the first bite of bread and butter to the drawn out sips of a final *cortado*, an espresso with steamed milk (see "Cortado Culture," page 62), knowing—fearing really—that the conversation would end and the real world would resume once the



Carlos Zinola at his Buenos Aires restaurant, Don Carlos; passion fruit custard, above. Facing page: pizza-style flank steak. See page 66 for recipes.

A WINDOW INTO THE CITY'S DIVERSE CULINARY HISTORY, LUNCH IS BUENOS AIRES' MAIN EVENT



DAVID SAX is a freelance writer living in Toronto. His last article for *SAVEUR* was about Vancouver dim sum (Jan./Feb. 2013 *Saveur* 100).

last drop was gone. When I'd get back to my apartment, I'd strip off my suit and collapse on the couch, tending to the rest of the day's work with nothing more than a snore. In the mornings, I'd pull myself together and manage to file my stories on time. I stayed in this happy, and hapless, state—eating, sleeping, writing, eating—for two years.

When I returned to Toronto, it was obvious that the leisurely lunch culture I'd grown accustomed to just didn't exist in North America. When I suggested meeting for lunch, my friends laughed me off. "Seriously?" they'd say. "Who has time for lunch?" Lunch was a sign of weakness. When someone conceded to join me for one, it usually involved a rushed catching-up in a food court. At least it was better than what passed for lunch for my wife Lauren: a few hurried bites in front of the computer, one hand glued to her mouse. I pined for Buenos Aires.

When I learned from friends this past fall that the city's long lunch was falling victim to the coun-

try's economic progress—a result of global business culture taking root in the city—and a proliferation of eat-and-run restaurants, I panicked and booked a flight. I needed to recapture those blissful food-filled afternoons while they still existed.

What I witnessed when I landed did little to assuage my fears. Near the Presidential Palace, young office workers lined up for the hottest thing to hit the city in decades: an American-style salad bar where you could pack a plastic container with as many buffet items as would fit. As I watched these functionaries in their business clothes, ladling in corn salad, hearts of palm, and shredded lettuce with the familiar glazed look of my friends back home, I knew they were destined to eat at their desks, eyes glued to the screen. Alone.

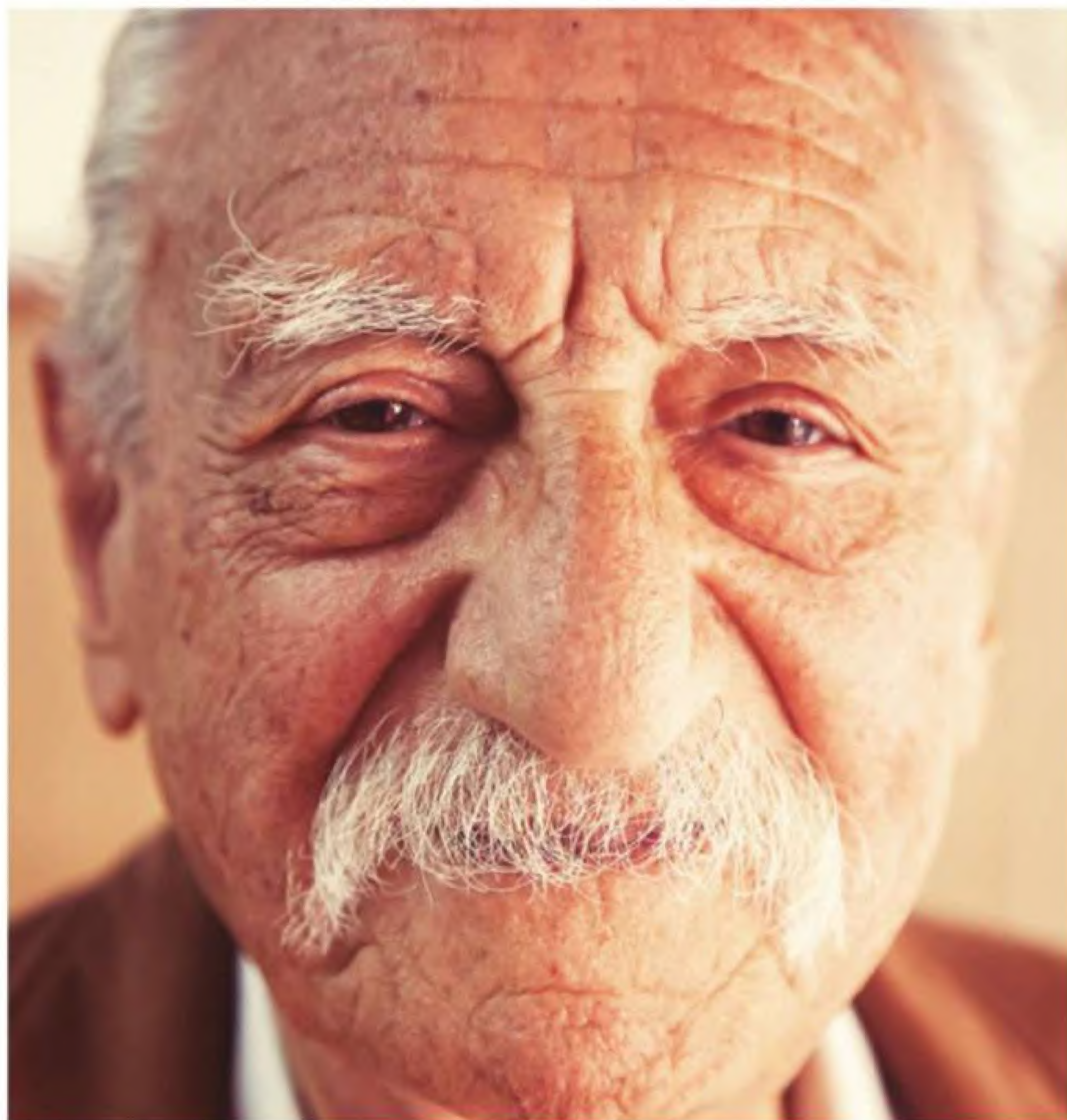
Jangled, I called my friend Andrés Jacob, a *Porteño*—slang for a Buenos Aires native—with whom I'd passed countless lunch hours. He told me to meet him at Sabot, a clubby lunch-only refuge in the city's financial district, a wood-paneled



Clockwise from top left: caramel flan; Moises Michan, a lunchtime customer at Pepe's cafeteria; outside Don Carlos, a restaurant in the city's historic La Boca neighborhood. Facing page: a spicy beef empanada. Recipes start on page 64.



IN NORTH AMERICA, MY FRIENDS LAUGHED: "SERIOUSLY?" THEY'D SAY, "WHO HAS TIME FOR LUNCH?"





On Edge The classic Argentine empanada is shaped like a half-moon, but the seal—a beautifully crimped fringe known as the *repulgue* (literally, “braided edge”)—has countless variations, ranging from the scalloped edge on the beef empanada at left to ① a ropelike twist, ② a flat band, or ③ pleated folds. *Repulgues* serve two purposes: They help contain the juicy fillings, and they help the empanada maker tell different flavors apart. Restaurants provide drawings of their different *repulgues* on take-out menus so customers can tell the difference. —Dominique Lemoine

Cortado Culture

One of the great joys of lunch in Buenos Aires is what comes near the end—the creamy caffeineated pick-me-up known as the *cortado*. Served in a short ceramic mug, the *cortado* is essentially a shot of espresso with an equal amount of steamed milk. It's similar to the Italian macchiato, but it contains no dry foam on top. The *cortado* and its popular counterpart, the *cafecito* (espresso), come straight from the city's strong Italian heritage. And just as in Italy, no meal, meeting, or encounter is complete without one. When enjoyed at a restaurant or café, the *cortado* is almost always accompanied by a sweet of some form or another—mini *alfajores* (shortbread sandwiches of *dulce de leche*) or little Italian-style amaretto cookies. *Cortados* also come with a small glass of seltzer on the side to cleanse diners' coffee-soaked palates and provide a brisk, bubbly finale to a long lunch. By far, the most storied place to have a *cortado* is at Las Violetas, an 1884 pâtisserie and café in the city's Almagro neighborhood. Here, the *cortado* is served on silver platters by white-jacketed waiters in a Belle Époque-style dining room that, with its marble floors and stained-glass windows, is one of the city's most elegant gathering places. —D.S.



palace of the leisure class complete with polished silverware, big-shot politicians, and classic Argentine cooking. Here, the lunch culture was alive and well. But over a cornucopia of Argentine dishes—*revuelto gramajo*, fluffy eggs scrambled with olive oil, ham, and fried shoestring potatoes; *escalopes de milanesa de lomo*, crispy breaded medallions of veal; *lenguado grille*, baked filet of sole, served with simple boiled potatoes dressed tableside in sweet and hot Spanish pimentón—Andrés lamented the general state of dining culture. “It’s less and less now, the three-course lunch,” he said. “It’s important to sit down, to talk. No matter if it’s cheap or expensive, it’s the time that’s the value.”

The afternoon sauntered on, and even by 3:30 most of the tables were still filled, customers linger-

ish meat pie are generally baked in Buenos Aires, not fried as they are in the rest of Latin America. Stuffed with everything from a combination of beef, raisins, and olives—a nod to the Middle Eastern settlers who came to the city around the onset of World War I—to corn with béchamel sauce, courtesy of the French, they’re a handheld glimpse into the city’s immigrant-rich history. Marta’s contained spicy beef, wrapped in crimped pastry (see “On Edge,” page 61) and baked to golden perfection. I had to adjust my position to eat them, leaning over the table so I wouldn’t ruin my pants as the juicy filling dripped out—the sign of a great empanada.

Later that week, I scheduled a lunch date with Héctor Marini, a bookish retiree and self-styled expert on the long lunch. I found him busy

IT’S IMPORTANT TO RELAX OVER LUNCH, WHETHER IT’S CHEAP OR EXPENSIVE



ing over coffee or, in the case of the couple behind us, a bottle of champagne. Toward the end of the meal, Ramon Couñago, Sabot’s owner for the past 41 years, joined us. “Ninety percent of my guests come here to talk business,” he said. “No one eats for less than two hours. Sometimes coffee can last an hour alone!”

I was relieved to find over the course of the next few days that while my favorite meal may indeed be threatened, bastions of the long lunch could still be found in every quarter of the sprawling city, some grand like Sabot, others modest but no less worthy of a leisurely repast. I met my friend Dawn Makinson—a fellow Canadian journalist who had wisely settled here—at Martita, a mom-and-pop restaurant in the middle-class Boedo neighborhood. Marta, the gregarious cook-owner who took our order in an apron, served us the flakiest empanadas I’ve ever eaten. These mini versions of the traditional Span-



preparing a late afternoon lunch of *matambre a la pizza*, or “steak pizza,” an Argentine twist on veal Parmesan—a dish that pointed at both the country’s Italian influences and its cattle-ranching past—with a delicate “crust” of milk-soaked flank steak slathered in tomato sauce and covered with gooey mozzarella cheese.

Indeed, Marini said, it was the cattle industry we had to thank not only for our lunch, but for Buenos Aires’ lunchtime tradition as a whole. “Our gaucho ancestors didn’t have time for a proper breakfast,” he explained as we dug into the dish, the bright sauce offsetting the creamy cheese and rich meat. “They had to get the animals moving.” The cowboys would take just a few moments when they woke to heat up water for maté (the country’s staple bitter tea), which they’d drink while horseback. After a morning of riding, they’d stop, make a fire, and grill up a huge cut of meat—the precursor to the *asados* I’d

The Guide Buenos Aires

Lunch for two with drinks and tip
Inexpensive Under \$15 Moderate \$40
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WHERE TO EAT

Sabot

25 de Mayo 756 (54/11/4313-6587). *Expensive*. Clubby and elite, Sabot remains one of the grandest guardians of the Argentine long lunch.

Martita

Cochabamba 3700 (54/11/4931-3584). *Moderate*. The presence of the eponymous Marta adds charm to every meal at this small restaurant, which specializes in juicy beef empanadas.

Carlitos de la Boca

Brandsen 699 (54/11/4362-2433). *Expensive*. Known to locals as Don Carlos, this tiny spot offers beloved Italian-Argentine dishes of broccolini, charcuterie, grilled meats, and pasta.

El Renaciente

Gorriti 3902 (54/11/4862-9905). *Inexpensive–Moderate*. Find everyday Argentine fare like sautéed veal and rice at this relaxed neighborhood restaurant.

Las Violetas

Av. Rivadavia 3899 (54/11/4958-7387). This elegant café bakes fine pastries to go with their *cortados*, all stylishly presented on silver platters.

Sandwichería Don Pepe

Defensa 129 (54/11/4343-9687). *Inexpensive*. Downtown workers jam Pepe’s lunch counter daily to make quick work of huge steak sandwiches and egg pies.

WHERE TO STAY

Bobo Hotel

Guatemala 4870 (54/11/4774-0505; bobohotel.com). \$115–\$245 for a double. An old townhouse refurbished with modern décor reflects the eclectic style of the city.

Fierro Hotel

Soler 5862 (54/11/3220-6800; fierrohotel.com). \$170–\$450 for a double. With wet bars and big comfortable sofas, each room at this luxurious boutique hotel feels like a suite.

Mansion Vitraux

Carlos Calvo 369 (54/11/4300-6886; mansionvitraux.com). \$140–\$400 for a double. This glamorous converted mansion has indoor waterfalls, a rooftop lap pool, and steam baths.

From left: El Renaciente diners; chorizo-stuffed mushrooms. Facing page: the *cortado*; pan-fried veal with herb tomato sauce. Recipes start on page 64.



From top: ham, egg, and tomato pie (see page 66 for recipe); a patron at El Renaciente.

attended—then sleep in the shade to avoid the hot sun. In camp at night, they’d eat a light dinner and sing by the fire. This schedule—small breakfast, big long lunch, late modest dinner—had been passed down through the generations.

These days, Marini continued, the midday break has become an antidote to the travails of modern life. While the rest of Argentina follows a siesta tradition, closing up schools and businesses for the afternoon, Buenos Aires chugs along all day. Lunch is the *Porteño’s* necessary escape from the grinding traffic, protests, choking exhaust, and chaos that define this city.

As my return to Toronto and its mad-dash midday meals loomed ever nearer, I wanted to commemorate my final Argentine lunch with proper fanfare. The day before my flight, I met Andrés at Don Carlos (officially Carlitos de la Boca), a corner *bodegón*, or bistro, in the historic La Boca neighborhood that personifies the city’s generous lunch spirit like no other. It’s one of the first spots Andrés introduced me to when I first moved here in my 20s and remains my sentimental favorite.

We sat down at a wooden bistro table in the restaurant’s small dining room, and owner Carlos Zinola, white-haired now but as laid-back as I remembered, came by to chat. He was born in the same house where his eponymous cash-only restaurant now resides, and he’s run it with his wife Marta and daughter Gabriela as a benevolent culinary dictatorship since 1970.

“My grandmother was Italian,” Carlos said. “She brought out a plate and I had to eat it, but everything

she put in front of me was the best I’d ever had.”

In that same spirit, there are no menus at the restaurant. Carlos asks how hungry you are, and the dishes fly fast and furious from his kitchen. It is here that the city’s Italian heritage is really on display. From the second Andrés and I sat down, small plates filled the table: broccolini with olive oil and cracked pepper, paper-thin slices of imported Italian mortadella, freshly prepared tuna salad with chunks of boiled potatoes. Next came meats he tended to on the *parrilla*: chorizo and blood sausages, sweet-breads cooked long and low then seared on high so a crunchy crust gave way to a tender interior. “Some wine?” Carlos stopped by throughout the meal to uncork excellent bottles. Andrés and I struggled to keep pace, but Carlos kept piling it on. Finally, we begged for mercy.

But no! There were desserts, all made by Gabriela: citrus-scented slices of bread pudding, a dense chocolate tart, and creamy passion fruit custard. “You see why it’s mostly foreigners who come to lunch here now?” Carlos remarked with a mixture of pride and longing, nearly four hours into our meal. The sun had begun to set. “You don’t go back to work after this. It’s violent, this lunch!”

Later that night, still reeling, I called Lauren back in Toronto. “What did you do today?” I asked. She gave me a rundown of her day: a quick breakfast at home, a little work, cleanup around the house, a little more work, some grocery shopping, and dinner with her mother.

“What about you?” she asked.

“Lunch,” I said. “Just lunch.” 🐔

Champiñones Rellenos de Chorizo

(Chorizo-Stuffed Mushrooms)

SERVES 6-8

Roasted mushrooms are stuffed with a chorizo, onion, and cheese filling in this recipe (pictured on page 63).

- 16 large cremini mushrooms, stems trimmed and finely chopped
- 1/2 cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 oz. raw Spanish-style chorizo sausage, casing removed (see page 100)
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1/3 cup grated pecorino romano cheese
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped parsley

1 Heat oven to 450°. Toss mushroom caps with 1/4 cup olive oil, salt, and pepper on a baking sheet; spread into an even layer. Bake until browned,

about 15 minutes. Transfer to a serving platter; keep warm.

2 Heat remaining oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add chorizo; cook, stirring to break up sausage into medium pieces, until browned, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and onion; cook until soft, 5-7 minutes. Add mushroom stems, salt, and pepper; cook until golden, 4-6 minutes more. Remove from heat; stir in cheese and half of parsley. Place 1-2 tbsp. filling in each mushroom cap. Garnish with remaining parsley; drizzle with olive oil.

Chuletas de Ternera al Sartén con Salsa de Tomate y Hierbas

(Pan-Fried Veal Cutlets with Herb Tomato Sauce)

SERVES 4

Seared veal cutlets (pictured on page 62) are topped with a pan sauce of onion, tomato, olive, and pickled peppers in our rendition of a dish served at El Renaciente in Buenos Aires.

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 1/2 lb. veal cutlets

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

- 1/2 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 8 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 small white onion, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup dry white wine
- 1 15-oz. can whole, peeled tomatoes, drained and crushed by hand
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 tbsp. roughly chopped parsley
- 2 1/2 tbsp. roughly chopped oregano
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 10 Spanish green olives, smashed
- 6 pickled cherry peppers, stemmed, seeded, and halved

1 Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Season veal with salt and pepper. Working in batches and adding more oil as needed, cook veal, flipping once, until browned and cooked to desired doneness, 4-6 minutes for medium. Transfer veal to a serving platter; keep warm.

2 Add remaining oil to pan. Add chile flakes, garlic, and onion; cook, stirring

occasionally, until golden, 6-8 minutes. Add wine; bring to a boil. Cook, stirring and scraping the bottom of the pan, until reduced by half, 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, bay leaf, and salt. Cook until tomatoes begin to break down, 3-5 minutes. Stir in parsley, oregano, lemon juice, olives, and peppers; spoon sauce over veal.

Empanadas de Carne

(Beef Empanadas)

MAKES 1 DOZEN

An Argentine lunch staple, these flaky baked empanadas (pictured on page 61) have a spicy beef filling.

For the dough:

- 1 cup water
- 3/4 cup lard
- 2 3/4 cups flour, plus more for dusting
- 2 tsp. kosher salt

For the filling:

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 lb. boneless beef shoulder, trimmed and finely chopped
- Kosher salt, to taste

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- 1 large red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and finely chopped
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1½ tsp. ground cumin
- 1½ tsp. Spanish hot paprika
- 1 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- ½ tsp. ground white pepper, plus more to taste
- 2 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, and finely chopped

1 Make the dough: Heat water and lard in a 1-qt. saucepan over medium heat until lard has melted, about 3 minutes; let cool slightly. Whisk flour and salt in a large bowl; make a well in the center of flour mixture. Slowly stir in lard mixture until a wet dough forms. Using your hands, knead until dough is smooth, about 2 minutes. Wrap dough in plastic wrap; chill for 2 hours.

2 Make the filling: Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Season beef with salt; cook until browned, 8-10 minutes. Transfer beef to a bowl; set aside. Add bell pepper and onion to pan; cook until golden, 12-14 minutes. Add cumin, paprika, chile flakes, and white pepper; cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add bell pepper mixture to bowl with beef; let cool. Stir in eggs, salt, and white pepper.

3 Heat oven to 375°. Divide dough into twelve 2" balls. On a lightly floured surface, and using a rolling pin, roll out dough balls into 5" circles. Place about 3 tbsp. filling in the center of each dough circle. Fold dough in half over the filling, forming a half circle, then use your fingers to gently press and seal the edges. To make a "rope" around the edge (see "Pinch Perfect," page 96), dog-ear one corner of the half circle. Move along the curved edge and pinch ½" of dough next to the dog-ear, stretching it toward you, before folding it back so it overlaps the dog-eared edge. Continue to pinch and fold the dough in ½" sections, slightly overlapping each previous fold, until you reach the opposite corner. Place empanadas on a baking sheet; bake until golden brown, 30-35 minutes.

✪ **Flan de Caramelo** (Caramel Flan) SERVES 6-8

This luscious, eggy, caramel-coated custard (pictured on page 60) is a favorite dessert in Buenos Aires.

- 1½ cups sugar
- 8 eggs, lightly beaten
- 4 cups milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

1 Heat oven to 350°. Melt ½ cup sugar in a 2-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook, without stirring, until sugar is a deep golden brown, 12-13 minutes. Carefully pour caramel into a 10" tube, or angel food cake, pan; tilt pan to evenly distribute caramel over bottom and partially up the sides of pan; place inside a roasting pan.

2 Whisk remaining sugar with eggs in a bowl until thick. Add milk and vanilla; whisk into a smooth custard. Pour custard into tube pan; transfer roasting pan to oven. Pour boiling water into roasting pan to come halfway up outside of tube pan. Bake until custard is set but still slightly loose in the center, about 1½ hours. Transfer tube pan to a wire rack; let cool. Chill at least 2 hours or up to overnight. Invert flan onto a serving platter. Slice into wedges and drizzle with any caramel sauce remaining in pan.

Matambre a la Pizza (Pizza-Style Flank Steak) SERVES 4-6

In this Italian-influenced Argentine dish, flank steak (pictured on page 58) is tenderized in milk and topped with a spicy tomato sauce and melted mozzarella.

- 1½ lb. flank steak, sliced in half horizontally and pounded into two ¼"-thick steaks
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 5 cups milk
- ¼ cup olive oil, plus more for greasing and drizzling
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 28-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes in juice, crushed
- 1½ tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 1½ tsp. finely chopped oregano
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 3 tbsp. finely chopped parsley, plus more for garnish
- 8 oz. shredded mozzarella

1 Place steaks in a 9" x 13" baking dish, season with salt and pepper, and cover with milk. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 2 hours, turning steaks once halfway through. Drain steaks, discarding milk, and rinse thoroughly; pat dry with paper towels.

2 Heat oil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic and onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, 8-10 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, chile flakes, oregano, sugar, salt, and pepper; bring to a boil. Cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce is thick, 20-25 minutes; stir in parsley and keep warm.

3 Heat oven to 425°. Season steaks with salt and pepper and place side by side on a greased baking sheet. Spread about 1 cup sauce on each steak. Top with cheese and drizzle with oil. Bake until cheese is melted and steaks are cooked to desired doneness, about 5-6 minutes for medium rare. Rest steaks 10 minutes and slice against the grain to serve; garnish with parsley.

Natilla de Maracuyá (Passion Fruit Custard) SERVES 8-10

This decadent custard (pictured on page 59) is infused with sweet-tangy passion fruit concentrate and topped with a fresh passion fruit syrup.

For the custard:

- Canola oil, for greasing pan
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 egg, plus 3 yolks, lightly beaten
- 1 cup milk
- 1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- ⅓ cup passion fruit concentrate (see page 100)

For the syrup:

- ⅓ cup sugar
- 4 passion fruit, sliced in half, seeds and pulp reserved

1 Make the custard: Heat oven to 350°. Lightly oil the inner sides of a 10" springform pan and tightly wrap bottom and sides with aluminum foil. Melt ½ cup sugar in a 2-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook, without stirring, until sugar is a deep golden brown, 12-13 minutes. Carefully pour caramel into springform pan; tilt pan to evenly distribute caramel over the bottom and place pan inside a roasting pan. Whisk remaining sugar with egg and yolks until thick. Whisk in milk, condensed milk, and passion fruit concentrate to make a smooth custard. Pour custard over caramel; transfer roasting pan to oven. Pour boiling water into roasting pan to come halfway up outside of springform pan. Bake until custard is set but still slightly loose in center, about 1 hour. Transfer springform pan to a wire rack; let cool. Chill at least 2 hours or up to overnight.

2 Make the syrup: Boil sugar and ¼ cup water in a 1-qt. saucepan; cook, stirring occasionally, until sugar is dissolved and syrup is thick, about 10 minutes. Whisk in passion fruit seeds and pulp; cook until pulp has dissolved in syrup, 3-4 minutes more; let cool completely.

3 To serve: Unmold and invert custard onto a serving platter. Slice into wedges

and drizzle with passion fruit syrup.

Tarta de Jamón, Huevo y Tomato (Ham, Egg, and Tomato Pie) SERVES 6-8

A semolina crust encases a savory filling of ham, cheese, tomato, and eggs in this dish (pictured on page 64) from Pepe's, a lunch spot in Buenos Aires.

- 2 large beefsteak tomatoes (about 1 lb.), cored and sliced crosswise ¼" thick
- Kosher salt, to taste, plus 1 tbsp.
- 2¼ cups fine semolina, plus more for dusting
- 1 cup water
- 2 tbsp. olive oil, plus more for greasing
- 8 oz. deli ham, thinly sliced
- 2 cups grated Monterey Jack cheese
- 8 eggs
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 tbsp. heavy cream

1 Spread tomato slices in a single layer on a double thickness of paper towels. Sprinkle salt over tomato slices and let drain for 1 hour. Blot dry with more paper towels.

2 Whisk semolina and 1 tbsp. salt in a bowl; make a well in the center. Stir water and oil into semolina mixture until dough forms. Transfer to a lightly floured surface and knead until dough is smooth and no longer sticky, about 12 minutes. Divide dough in half and flatten each half into a disk; place on a greased baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes.

3 Heat oven to 400°. On a lightly greased surface, roll 1 disk dough into a 12" circle about ⅛" thick. Fit into a 9" pie plate. Trim edges, leaving 1" dough overhanging edge of plate. Layer half the ham over dough and sprinkle with half the cheese; repeat with remaining ham and cheese. Arrange tomato slices over top, overlapping slightly. Crack 7 eggs over tomatoes, keeping yolks intact; season with salt and pepper. Roll remaining disk dough into a 12" circle about ⅛" thick and place over top of pie. Pinch top and bottom edges of dough together and fold under; crimp edges to seal.

4 Whisk remaining egg with cream; brush over top of pie. Cut several 1"-long slits in top of pie. Bake until crust is golden and filling is bubbly, about 50 minutes. Remove pie from oven and heat oven to broil. Broil pie until crust is browned, 2-3 minutes. Let pie cool slightly before serving.

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Rhapsody in Red

One writer
explores the
beauty of
Hungarian
cuisine one
home cook at
a time

By Carolyn Bánfalvi
Photographs by Todd Coleman

Mária Keresztes Kovács, a home cook in
Kecskemét, Hungary, cups a handful of
paprika.



I WAS STANDING IN my Budapest kitchen amid bright red communist-era cabinets, miniature appliances, and mismatched pots and plates, poring over a recipe for stuffed peppers. It was from a tattered old Hungarian cookbook, the *Móra Ferencné Szakácskönyv* (Mrs. Ferenc Móra's Cookbook), which I'd bought at a used bookshop in Budapest. I spoke Hungarian pretty well and could read it too—or so I thought.

"We are blanching the peppers," Móra wrote. Wait, how many peppers? For how long? "The stuffing is made in the same way as for stuffed cabbage, but you parboil the rice a little bit." Come again? How much rice? How long is "a little bit"? I did my best to soldier on.

Procuring the ingredients had been simple, a joy even. At the soaring halls of the cathedral-like central market in Budapest I had my pick of different grades of hand-ground paprika in varying shades of red; incredibly fresh local produce; pristine dairy products, from *tejföl* (the sour cream that is so essential to many Hungarian recipes) to hand-churned butter and raw milk; and richly marbled cuts of pork, much of it from the country's native curly-haired Mangalica pigs.

But despite such exemplary raw material, there I was faced with the desultory results: a pot of wilted peppers and crunchy rice floating in a thin sauce. This was definitely not how it was supposed to look, or taste, though I presented it to my husband Gábor with the best flourish I could muster. It was then, as he bravely struggled to eat it—with images of simmering chicken paprikash, delicate stuffed cabbage, and proper stuffed peppers swirling in my head—that I realized there was only one way I was going to learn how to cook Hungarian food: I had to apprentice myself to the best Hungarian cook I knew. So I picked up the phone and called my mother-in-law.

IT HAD BEEN EIGHT years since I first set foot in Hungary. Gábor and I had met working on a cruise ship in the Caribbean and dated for a few years in the U.S. One summer when he was visiting his family, he invited me to join him. I flew in from Washington, D.C., and Gábor picked me up at the airport. I had arrived right at lunchtime; my stomach rumbled, but he told me not to worry—his mom was making lunch. As *(continued on page 74)*

CAROLYN BÁNFALVI is the author of *Food Wine Budapest* (Little Bookroom, 2008). Her last article for *SAVEUR* was "Soup of Ages" (March 2009).





Clockwise from top left: *tepertős pogácsa*, rolls with cracklings and prune jam; *töltött káposzta*, Hungarian-style stuffed cabbage; the author's husband Gábor (black shirt) and her in-laws sit down at the home of Mária Keresztes Kovács in Kecskemét to a lunch of chicken paprikash, fruit soup, cucumber salad, and *szilvás pite*, or plum cake. Recipes start on page 80.





Zsírban sült sertés oldalas, braised and fried pork spareribs, served with fresh peppers and tomatoes (see page 81 for recipe).

(continued from page 70) we made our way toward Bőny, the little village northwest of Budapest where Gábor was born and raised, I was filled with nervous anticipation. I'd never met his family before, and I knew just a handful of Hungarian words.

Two hours later we pulled up to an elegant old house at the end of a long driveway and were ushered to a table in the garden set under towering horse chestnut and walnut trees. Gábor's mom Kati, a slim woman in her mid-50s, brought out a tray of glasses filled with *diólikőr*; she'd made the dark brown liqueur with walnuts from the branches that hung above us. I threw back the shot—it was sweet, bitter, and spicy in the back of my throat. It perked up my taste buds.

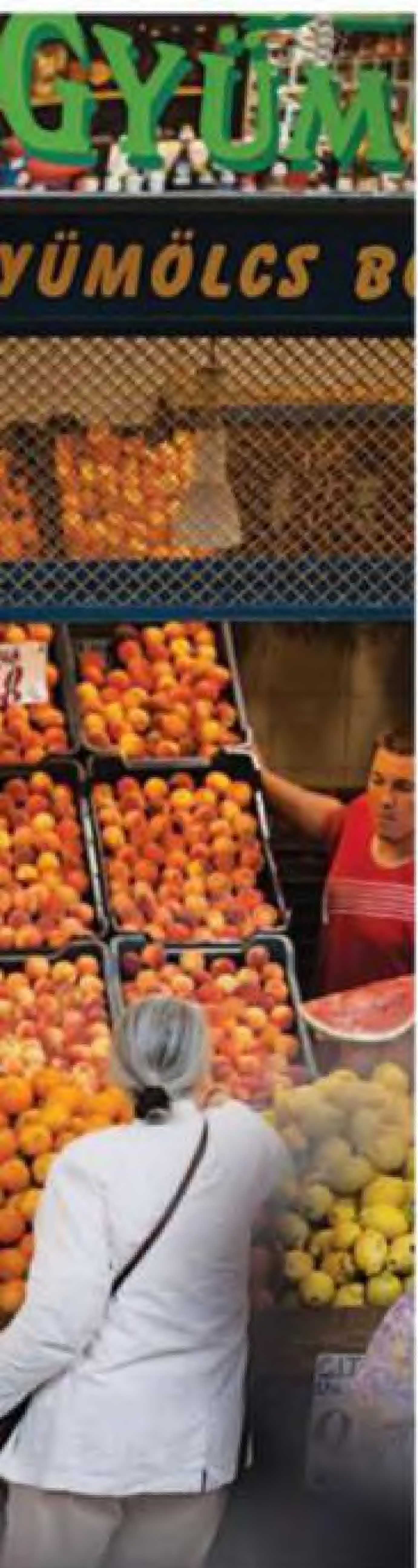
Kati served the first course, *húsleves*, whole root vegetables and homemade pasta simmered in a clear consommé. The family passed around a small bowl of hot ground paprika, which each person added to the bowls. I followed suit. The rich soup, laced with smoky heat, worked with the liquor to lift me out of my exhaustion. A succession of platters followed: beef bones, from which we tapped the marrow, spread it on toast, and sprinkled it with salt, black pepper, and more paprika; then a slab of beef braised in red wine; a plate of charcuterie fringed with raw sliced peppers and red onions; glasses of furmint, a white wine that tasted of grapefruit and apricots; cucumbers in a sweet and tangy dressing of sour cream, sugar, and vinegar; and a veritable encyclopedia of pickles. I was getting full, but, wait, there was dessert: *szilvás pite*, a sheet cake dotted with fresh plums that we chased with strong black coffee. I was full of questions and excitement. What was this delicious world I'd stumbled into?

EXPLORING THE ANSWER to that question has become a life-changing endeavor. A few years after that first visit, I married Gábor and we moved to Budapest where I worked as a journalist. We've been here ever since.

Hungary is a country roughly the size of Indiana, a landlocked place squished between Austria, Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia, Ukraine, Croatia, and Serbia. Because of its location—as well as the complex history of border changes, wars, and occupations in this part of Europe—Hungarians have always heavily shared and borrowed recipes and ingredients: garlic, onions, and pasta arrived when Hungary's King Mátyás married Italy's Beatrice of Naples in the 15th century; paprika, made from ground sun-dried chiles, was introduced when Turks invaded the country in the 16th



Clockwise from top left: *csülkös bableves*, Hungarian bean and ham soup; Edit Szabó Gézané, a home cook in Kistar; *paprikás csirke*, chicken paprikash; a produce vendor at Budapest's Central Market Hall. Recipes start on page 80.





From top: an assortment of Hungarian charcuterie served with bread, onions, and peppers; Mária Keresztes Kovács and her husband László cooking chicken paprikash; assorted pickles for sale at Budapest's central market.

century (see “Big Red Flavor,” page 78). Today the spice is one of the pillars of local cooking. Under Austrian rule in the 18th century, there was a great flowering in Hungarian cookery, from agriculture all the way up to imperial cuisine. It peaked under the Austro-Hungarian empire in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when chefs from France cooking for the court applied refined culinary techniques to traditional Hungarian dishes. This all amounted to a unique and layered cuisine. Things changed, though, in the 20th century, when under communism Hungarian businesses were nationalized and restaurant culture was all but wiped out. But the bones of the cuisine survived in the home-cooked dishes that had been here for centuries—simple, deeply flavored foods built on fat, onions, and paprika—enduring in the kitchens of women who kept culinary traditions alive, passing them down from grandmother to mother to child.

IN 2005, WHEN GÁBOR and I started our own family, we made weekly visits to Kati's house in the countryside, where Kati cooked the same dishes for my children as she had for my husband when he was a child. While I'd eaten in myriad Hungarian restaurants and in the homes of many Hungarian friends, I wanted to dig deeper into the cuisine. Watching my children inhale everything Kati prepared made me want to cook those dishes for them too.

But then I encountered the problem of the indecipherable Hungarian cookbooks, which is how I found myself in Kati's tiny nook of a kitchen one afternoon, not as a guest, but as an apprentice.

Kati didn't offer me formal cooking lessons, but let me ask questions and take notes as she cooked, and I gradually picked up the techniques and recipes that hadn't made their way into Móra's cryptic cookbook. I noticed how, as she made *paprikás csirke*, chicken simmered in a paprika-spiked sauce, she slowly cooked diced onions in lard and a bit of water until they were translucent, then turned off the heat before quickly stirring in a heap of paprika. “If the paprika burns, it turns bitter,” she explained. I saw that she kept a jar of *zsír*, a blend of rendered pork fat and cracklings, on hand. She'd dip into that jar to add a smoky, bacony depth to soups, stews, or sauces, or even fold it into the dough for *tepertős pogácsa*, flaky, savory, yeast-risen rolls that she might stuff with a prune filling. I quickly started a jar of my own at home.

As my cooking improved, I started asking other Hungarian friends if I could watch them



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Big Red Flavor

The long, slender variety of *Capsicum annuum* pepper and the method for drying and grinding it to produce paprika are thought to have been introduced to Hungary by Turkish invaders in the early 1500s. It was a hit with Hungarian farmers, who found that the pepper thrived in the country's mineral-rich soil and sunny climate. By the mid-1800s, paprika had taken hold: Everyone from the peasantry to upper classes had embraced the spice. Today, while paprika is produced in other countries, the Hungarian version is widely considered the best. Paprika varies in spiciness depending on the amount of capsaicin-packed seeds and ribs incorporated into the spice. ① **Hot paprika** (labeled *csipős* or *erős*), which includes the seeds and ribs, is used to add heat to a finished dish. In addition to powdered paprika, cooks work with a variety of condiments made from minced fresh paprika peppers. ② **Piros Arany**, a smooth, creamy red paste sold in tubes, comes in mild and hot versions and is popular as a sandwich spread. Hungarian cooks prize ③ **sweet paprika** (sometimes labeled *édes*) for its fruity, earthy flavor. Made from the flesh of the chiles only, it's typically added to cooking fat to create a base for paprikás dishes, soups, stews, and more. ④ **Édes Anna**, a mild, coarse paste, is used mainly at the table to flavor soups or stews. For purchasing information, see THE PANTRY, page 100. —C.B.

cook too, and with every kitchen I visited, the cuisine took on another dimension. It struck me how resourceful their cooking was. In various ways, these home cooks transformed basic ingredients—flour, fat, milk—into extravagant dishes. From Mária Keresztes Kovács, Gábor's sister's mother-in-law, I learned how to thicken soups by whisking *rántás*, a roux of flour and lard enriched with sour cream, into the soup's base; added to *csülkös bableves*, a soup of pork and beans, the *rántás* transforms the rustic dish into something luxurious. From the hands of Edit Szabó Gézáné, a radiant 54-year-old home cook in Kisar whom I knew through a mutual friend, even stuffed cabbage leaves astonished me. She steamed the leaves and used them to create tight conical packages that held a polenta-like cornmeal filling studded with ham and slivers of pepper. Bathed in a bright tomato sauce, the dish was a gorgeous play of flavors. But her simplest dish was my favorite: She braised pork ribs in lard, transforming the rib meat into an unctuous confit, then fried them to create



a crisp exterior. Served with sliced sweet peppers and wedges of ripe tomato, it was a dish in perfect balance.

Thanks to these women, I now have a small but growing roster of dishes of my own. I'll make chicken paprikash with homemade *galuska*, little dumplings I form by pushing egg dough through a spätzle plane into boiling water. I make *szilvás pite*, reveling in the way the tart, juicy ripe plums from the market meld with the tender sheet cake.

But try as I might, Kati's food is still our household's benchmark—more so than ever, in fact. After realizing that she spent more of her time visiting her grandchildren than at her own home, Kati moved to Budapest; she now lives two doors down from us, where she welcomes a steady flow of family members coming to eat. She is guiding the taste of another generation. "It wasn't as good as Nana's," is often the reply I get when I ask my children how they enjoyed dinner at our house. I don't mind one bit—if I surpassed my mentor, whom would I have to learn from? 🐾

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Csülkös Bableves

(Hungarian Bean and Ham Soup)

SERVES 8-10

This simple bean and ham soup (pictured on page 74) is thickened once the beans are tender with a paprika-laced roux of lard, flour, and sour cream.

- 1/2 cup lard or canola oil
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium carrot, minced
- 1 medium yellow onion, minced
- 1 small parsnip, minced
- 1 stalk celery, minced
- 1 lb. dried pinto beans, soaked overnight and drained
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 large smoked ham hock
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. Hungarian sweet paprika, plus more for garnish
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup sour cream

1 Melt half the lard or heat half the oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic, carrot, onion, parsnip, and celery; cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, 7-9 minutes. Add beans, bay leaves, ham hock, and 12 cups water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, partially covered, until beans are very tender, about 2 hours.

2 Transfer ham hock to a cutting board

and let cool, then discard skin and bone. Shred meat and stir into soup. Heat remaining lard or oil in a 2-qt. saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in flour until smooth; cook 2 minutes. Whisk in paprika, salt, and pepper; cook 1 minute. Whisk in sour cream. Stir mixture into soup and cook until slightly thickened, 4-6 minutes more. Ladle soup into serving bowls; garnish with more paprika, if you like.

Paprikás Csirke

(Chicken Paprikash)

SERVES 4-6

Chicken is braised in a brick-red sauce of sweet paprika and chicken stock in this classic Hungarian dish (pictured on page 75).

- 1/4 cup lard or canola oil
- 1 3-4-lb. chicken, cut into 8 pieces
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 3 tbsp. Hungarian sweet paprika, plus more for garnish
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 plum tomatoes, cored, seeded, and cut into 1" pieces
- 1 Italian frying pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into 1" pieces
- 1/2 cup sour cream, for serving

Melt lard or heat oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Season

chicken with salt and pepper. Working in batches, cook, flipping once, until browned, 8-10 minutes. Transfer chicken to a plate; set aside. Add onion to pan; cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 8 minutes. Add paprika; cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Return chicken and its juices to the pan. Add stock, tomatoes, and Italian frying pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, partially covered, until chicken is fully cooked, about 30 minutes. Transfer chicken and sauce to a serving platter; spoon sour cream over top and garnish with more paprika.

Szilvás Pite

(Hungarian Plum Cake)

SERVES 10-12

Yogurt adds a slight tartness to this cake (pictured on page 70) from home cook Mária Keresztes Kovács. Our recipe calls for plums, but apricots, peaches, or any stone fruit works too.

- Unsalted butter, for pan
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup sugar, plus 2 tbsp. for sprinkling
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1/3 cup canola oil
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 8 ripe plums, halved and pitted
- 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon

Heat oven to 375°. Grease a 9" x 13" baking dish with butter; set aside. Whisk flour, baking powder, and salt in a bowl. Whisk 1 cup sugar and the eggs together in a bowl until smooth. Stir in yogurt, oil, and vanilla. Add dry ingredients; whisk into a smooth batter. Pour batter into greased pan and smooth top with a rubber spatula; arrange plum halves, cut sides down, evenly over batter. Combine remaining sugar with cinnamon in a bowl; sprinkle over the top. Bake until plums are very tender and a toothpick inserted into middle of cake comes out clean, about 50 minutes. Let cool and slice into squares to serve.

Tepertős Pogácsa

(Rolls with Cracklings and Prune Jam)

MAKES 20 ROLLS

In this recipe from Hungarian home cook Edit Szabó Gézáné, rolls (pictured on page 70) are enriched with lard and pork cracklings and filled with a thick prune jam called *lekvár*. See page 100 for hard-to-find ingredients.

- 3 tbsp. milk, heated to 115°, plus 3/4 cup
- 2 1/4-oz. packages active dry yeast
- 3 1/4 cups flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 tbsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 cups minced pork cracklings

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Born a racer.

- 8 tbsp. lard, melted, plus more for greasing
- 1 tbsp. light rum
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten, plus 1 yolk
- 1/2 cup prune lekvár or prune jam
- 1/4 cup boiling water

1 Combine 3 tbsp. milk and the yeast in a bowl; let sit until foamy, about 10 minutes. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, salt, and pepper. Add yeast mixture, remaining milk, and the cracklings, lard, rum, and beaten eggs; stir until dough comes together. Knead in bowl until smooth, about 2 minutes. Cover dough loosely with plastic wrap and set in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

2 Grease a 9" x 13" baking dish with lard; set aside. Stir prune *lekvár* and boiling water together in a bowl. On a heavily floured surface, roll dough into a 14" x 17" rectangle about 1/4" thick. Spread evenly with *lekvár* mixture, leaving a 1/2" border; fold dough in half lengthwise. Cut dough into eighteen 2"-square rolls. Transfer to greased dish; cover loosely with plastic wrap, and set in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

3 Heat oven to 350°. Stir egg yolk and 1 tsp. water together in a bowl. Brush tops of rolls lightly with egg yolk mixture; bake until golden brown and cooked through, about 30 minutes.

✪ Töltött Káposzta (Hungarian-Style Stuffed Cabbage) SERVES 8

A thick cornmeal and smoked ham filling is rolled in blanched cabbage leaves and braised in a paprika-spiked tomato sauce in this comforting dish (pictured on page 71) from home cook Edit Szabó Gézáné.

- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 large head cabbage, cored
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 8 oz. smoked ham steak, cut into 1/4" pieces
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 5 1/2 cups chicken stock
- 1 1/3 cups fine yellow cornmeal
- 1/2 tbsp. Hungarian hot paprika
- 1/2 tbsp. Hungarian sweet paprika, plus more for garnish
- 1 6-oz. can tomato paste
- 1 tsp. roughly chopped parsley, for garnish
- 1 Italian frying pepper, thinly sliced into rings and seeded, for garnish
- Sour cream, for serving

1 Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add head of cabbage and cook, pulling off each outer leaf with tongs as it becomes tender, 2–4 minutes per leaf. Transfer cabbage leaves to a baking sheet; set aside and continue boiling cabbage until you have 12–15

leaves. Cut and discard thick ribs from leaves. Thinly slice remaining cabbage core; set aside.

2 Heat oil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add ham; cook until lightly browned, 3–4 minutes. Add garlic and onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, 5–7 minutes. Add 2 1/2 cups stock; bring to a boil. Whisk in cornmeal and the hot paprika, plus salt and pepper; set filling aside.

3 Working with one cabbage leaf at a time, lay leaf flat on a work surface with what was the stem end facing you. Place 1/4 cup filling in the center of leaf. Fold top of leaf over filling. Fold in half crosswise, completely encasing the filling at the top; roll cabbage into a tight cone shape.

4 Place sliced cabbage in the bottom of an 8-qt. saucepan. Arrange stuffed cabbage leaves, overlapping slightly, over top. Sprinkle with sweet paprika, salt, and pepper. Whisk tomato paste and remaining stock in a bowl; pour over cabbage. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, partially covered, until tender, about 45 minutes. Transfer stuffed cabbage to a serving platter. Strain sauce, discarding sliced cabbage; spoon sauce over the top. Garnish with parsley, sliced pepper, and sour cream; sprinkle with more sweet paprika.

Zsirban Sült Sertés Oldalas (Braised and Fried Pork Spareribs)

SERVES 4

Meaty pork spareribs are rendered tender in a confit of lard, then fried until crisp and dusted with a mixture of hot and sweet paprika (pictured on page 72).

- 2 lb. lard or canola oil, for frying
- 2 lb. pork spareribs, sliced into individual ribs
- 1/2 tbsp. Hungarian sweet paprika
- 1/2 tbsp. Hungarian hot paprika
- 1/2 tsp. granulated garlic
- 1/4 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 Italian frying pepper, thinly sliced into rings, for serving
- 1 medium tomato, cut into wedges, for serving

Melt lard or heat enough oil in a 6-qt. saucepan until a depth of 2" is reached. Heat until a deep-fry thermometer reads 200°. Add ribs all at once; cook, stirring occasionally, until ribs are tender, about 1 hour. Using tongs, transfer ribs to a plate. Increase lard temperature to 325°. Working in batches, fry ribs until browned and crisp, 5–7 minutes. Transfer ribs to paper towels to drain. Stir paprikas, granulated garlic, nutmeg, salt, and pepper together in a bowl; sprinkle over ribs. Serve ribs with pepper and tomato.



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**By Melissa Buote
Photographs by
Gemma and Andrew
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Prince Edward Island's North Rustico Harbour. Facing
page: chicken *fricot* (see page 90 for recipe).



W

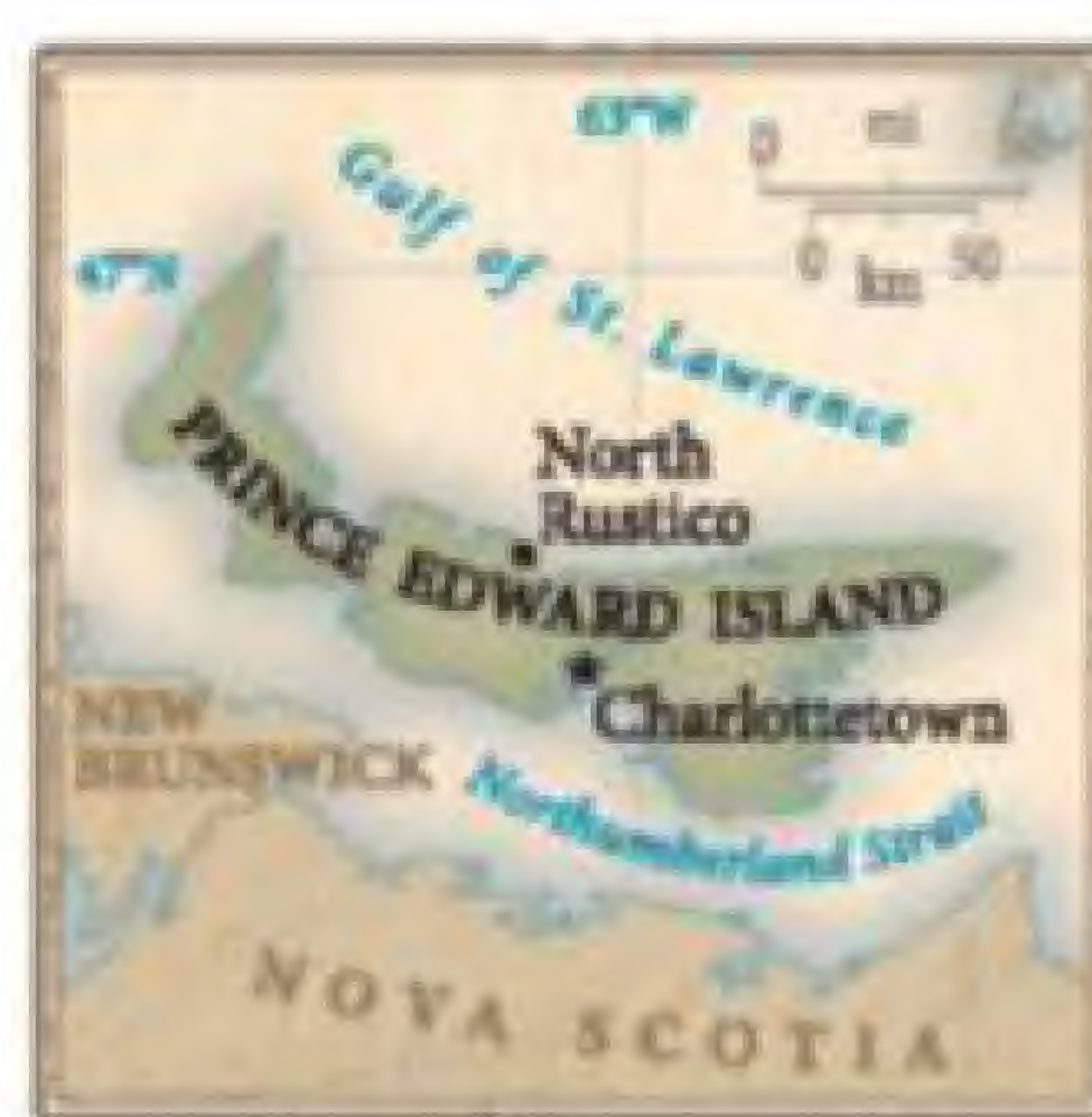
ITH A CLOUDY thump, my mother dumps more flour into the spongy pile. When the dough has formed, she presses into it with the heels of her small hands. “Clarice made dough the same way,” she says as I watch her knead it into a plump, perfect dome. “You do it so often, it’s more of a feeling than it is a recipe.”

That feeling isn’t just tactile; there is a sentimentality mixed into the food my mother has cooked through the years. From Sunday dinners to summer picnics, it’s been a familiar sight: my mother, Marion, kneading dough or mashing potatoes according to recipes learned from my father’s mother, Clarice Buote, on Prince Edward Island, or PEI. Now, at my parents’ house on PEI, where I’ve traveled from my mainland home in Halifax, she’s at it again, making cinnamon rolls, cooking from a weathered green cookbook filled with family recipes. Notes about when we ate what and how we felt about it are scrawled in the margins. Every page is a yearbook, echoing the warmth of dinners past. The rolls—a family favorite—will cap off one of the many bonfires we enjoy in the summer and fall months; today our aunts and uncles, cousins and friends are gathering for a mussel and corn boil on the beach.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND IS tiny. When I was growing up a few hours away in rocky Nova Scotia, the Island, a Canadian province on the Atlantic coast, seemed like a mere sandbar to me. On this strip of rockless red sand tucked between the chilly Gulf of St. Lawrence and the relatively warm Northumberland Strait, a nonstop drive along the All Weather Highway from tip to tail took us less than four hours. But Islanders know that PEI’s diminutive size belies its abundance: Fishermen pull pristine seafood from its cold waters, and its rich soil yields impeccable potatoes and other produce.

Every summer and Christmas we would arrive on the ferry from Nova Scotia to visit my grandparents, Clarice and Ernest—Grammy and Grampy to me. So many of my memories of those visits are tied up in ghostly recollections of Grammy’s soft, wrinkled hands, her wry smile, the wispy curls of her hair—or the sandpaper bristle of

MELISSA BUOTE is a food and culture writer from Halifax, Nova Scotia. This is her first story for *SAVEUR*.



I recall the wet, earthy smell of simmering potatoes, and the way the thick, salty steam of a boiled ham dinner would hang in the air



From top: from left to right, Clarice, Ernest, and Marion Buote in 1980; green tomato chow (see page 90 for recipe). Facing page: Scott Linkletter of Raspberry Point Oysters.

Grampy’s whiskers. But even more, as I grow older, I recall the wet, earthy smell of simmering potatoes; the way the thick, salty steam of a boiled dinner of ham and vegetables would hang in the air; the clunks and scrapes of wooden chairs as we gathered at the old kitchen table in the small white house that overlooked Rustico Harbour.

My father grew up in that house in the 1940s and ’50s, back when the place was a working farm. My grandparents didn’t have electricity until 1956. That meant that meals like boiled ham dinners and fish cakes were prepared on a wood-fueled stove out of necessity. And that necessity became tradition. They made simple foods from the animals and vegetables on their farm and seafood from “the Crick.” They’d cure the seafood in piles of salt chips they kept in the barn for use year-round.

The Crick is North Rustico, a fishing village on the North Shore of the Island. The town sits on a tiny creek that empties out into the harbor, a series of small weather-worn fishing shacks, neon-bright buoys, and deceptively strong, splintered lobster traps spanning the curved wharf. A corps of fishing boats bob alongside the wharf in the summer and sit sentry on the nearby gravel in the winter. The only time those boats are absent is when their owners are off catching the cod, mackerel, and lobster that make up so much of the local fare. The fresh fish gets hauled to local restaurants like the Water-Prince Corner Shop in Charlottetown, the capital, where the velvety seafood chowder is chockful of haddock and halibut, lobster and crabmeat and scallops, or to the Blue Mussel Café on the edge of Rustico Harbour, where my sister and I like to dig into creamy gratinéed seafood bakes. Casual seafood eateries like these two dot the towns and villages that run along Route 6 on the North Shore, and tucked in among them are small bakeries serving homey desserts: moist caramel-topped bread pudding, lemon meringue tarts, and molasses cookies like the ones my Grammy would have sitting on her counter, a sweet ending to our rustic Island meals.

The coastline on the North Shore where the harbor snakes in toward where my grandparents’ old house was, and where my parents’ house now sits, has the same gentle, ragged slope as the rest of PEI, like a sand castle that’s been kicked over by the Atlantic. There are no rocks; the sharpest things you’ll find are mussels, clamshells, and the





4. Dredge back and brush the
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Island accents: *tree* for “three,” *ting* for “thing.” Fields, like the one that runs down to the shore from beside my grandparents’ house—where my sister now resides—are filled with dozens of varieties of potatoes: long, brown-skinned Russet Burbanks and tan Century Russets; sweet, yellow-fleshed Yukon golds; smooth-skinned Superiors and round Emmas. Outside of Anne of Green Gables, the eponymous heroine of PEI native Lucy Maud Montgomery’s classic 1908 novel, potatoes are the Island’s signature export. And to a woman like my Grammy, the only way to eat a potato was to boil it.

Grammy and Grampy lived on the North Shore their whole lives, adding 14 children to their home in Rustico. My father Vernon, the second-oldest son, longed for adventure; he left as a teenager in the early 1960s and joined the navy and then the air force. Along the way he married. My mother, a native of Manitoba on the mainland, laughs her familiar, throaty chuckle as she tells me about her first time cooking for my grandfather. She made spaghetti. When my Grammy, who was on a trip, called to say hello, he told her, “She’s trying to kill me.”

My grandparents, you see, were steadfast in their use of traditional Acadian recipes; those boiled dinners, meat pies, fish cakes, beans, chowder, and bannock—a biscuity quick bread that Grammy would make when she ran out of the real deal—stuck with them. Farm-to-table cooking was a way of life, from the early 17th century when French colonists like my ancestors first settled in the Atlantic Canadian region then called Acadia, through their expulsion at the hands of the British, who had taken control of the area in the early 1700s, and their eventual return to settlements throughout the East Coast. Rustico is one of the oldest Acadian settlements on PEI, home to generations of Buotes (pronounced BEE-oughts) since François Jean Buote returned from exile in 1780.

Aside from the high school French that every good Canadian learns, the language has, for the most part, fallen by the wayside in my family and around the Crick. But the uncomplicated one-pot frontier-style cooking has remained at the heart of Island kitchens. There are two elements to each dish: simplicity and starch. After all, on PEI, the potato reigns supreme. Scalloped potatoes are made creamy with a basic mix of flour, butter, and milk. Fluffy fish cakes meld the briny smack of salt cod with a hearty potato mash. A cold salad of smashed potatoes relies on little other than the yellow flesh of an earthy Russet. And soups, like the *fricot* my grandmother made, have huge

Fresh rolls and soft butter, chunks of cheddar, and jars of mustard pickles and tart green tomato chow were meant to be eaten with whatever was cooking in Grammy’s murmuring pots



From top: Vernon Buote; bread pudding with caramel sauce; Marion Buote’s meat pie. Facing page: Water-Prince Corner Shop’s chowder. Recipes start on page 90.



chunks of tender potato.

My mother watched Grammy boil chicken and shred the warm meat into that *fricot*’s thin, fragrant broth. A versatile soup made with almost any meat or fish, *fricot* is the quintessential Acadian food: easy, adaptable, and comforting. Grammy seasoned it with summer savory, a pungent, peppery herb with a delicate, piney zest. She learned, too, to make the meat pie that Grammy’s own mother had passed down: onion mixed with shredded beef, pork, chicken—and sometimes freshly hunted rabbit—with a crust that falls somewhere between flaky and bready. My mother made those pies until she got it just right, then started gentle tweaks, like adding some cooking water from the meat to the crust. She made each recipe her own, working the ubiquitous potato water into the cinnamon rolls, and cracking an egg into the mashed potatoes during the final mash to give them a silky texture.

On Grammy’s table, we would almost always find those meat pies, along with fresh rolls and soft butter, chunks of cheddar, jars of mustard pickles, and a tangy green tomato relish we called chow, all of it meant to be eaten with whatever was cooking in her murmuring pots. That might be a boiled dinner, the deeply salty, rosy pink ham stewing atop stocky neck bones alongside potatoes, cabbage, and carrots. Or a seafood chowder, stovetop beans, or that chicken *fricot* with its pillowy dumplings. If there was a crowd—there often was—the kids would be relegated to the living room where we ate around the coffee table in the shadow of my Grammy’s collection of tiny spoons. I would sneak into the spare bedroom where a cabinet full of porcelain dolls smiled down at me, or dress up in musty fur coats with my sister in the cavernous downstairs closet.

There was adventure to be had in those rooms, but it was outside where the fun really started, at bonfires on the shores near the string of houses my grandparents, aunts, and uncles lived in, or in the overgrown woodland my Grampy owned. Down on the shore, denim tucked into tall black boots, my keen-eyed father and uncles would find telltale holes in the mud. Each step would squish or gurgle, eclipsed by the gritty sound of a shovel breaking ground. Soft-shell and razor clams would squirt their discontent as they rattled into the puddle of seawater at the bottom of the heavy steamer pot perched on a makeshift stovetop of angle iron or rocks. While they dug for clams, my brother, sister, and I would go down to the creek to catch eels and flatfish. We’d take the haul back to our

COURTESY MELISSA BUOTE (ARCHIVAL); PENNY DE LOS SANTOS (BREAD PUDDING)



grandparents, where in the minute it took for my sister to squeal with horror over the idea of eating an eel, Grammy would have it butchered and pan-ready.

Eventually the vacations ended, we kids grew up, and, like all good Islanders, my father returned for good. There is an old rhyme that my cousins used to chant in sing-song voice: “I was Prince Edward Island born and Prince Edward Island bred, and when I die I’ll be Prince Edward Island dead.” It’s no surprise to us that the mud on PEI is so vibrantly red; it’s like blood in the hearts of the people there.

For me, though, it’s the quiet sensations of my grandmother’s kitchen—the ones that seemed like background noise back then—that are at the starchy heart of my own devotion: the purple stains of a blueberry grunt, sticky fingers from a crumbling date square, the yeasty smell of all-purpose dough, the aroma of simmering salt cod sloughing off some of its puckering flavor before it’s mixed with russet potatoes for fish cakes. It may as well be potato water that runs through my own veins.


MY MOTHER HAS NEARLY FINISHED baking the dozens of rolls she’s made for this night’s bonfire, hair falling into her eyes as she leans into the hot oven to pull out a fresh pan. I drive the short distance down the winding dirt road that leads to my Aunt Geri’s house, a bowl of

Mussels sit in a pot with seawater and a glug of beer. As I eat, savoring the brine on my tongue, I am grateful for my parents’ devotion to Prince Edward Island



From top: The author’s friends and family gather on the shore in North Rustico Harbour for a bonfire and clambake; the author’s mother, Marion Buote.

potato salad on my lap, ears of corn bouncing around the backseat. Much like they did when I was a kid, my aunts and uncles, cousins and friends dot the shore where we’ve lit our fire, digging and shucking, children laughing at the decades-old hijinks of my Uncle Selwyn. My mother joins us with a tray of fresh cinnamon rolls, and we all tear into the feathery pastries, fingers sticky with brown sugar and butter.

For our dinner, we shore up our supply of freshly dug clams with bags of briny Raspberry Point oysters collected by our fisherman friend Scott Linkletter from the cold northern waters in the national park. Each deep-cupped mollusk tastes like the Atlantic. The corn, a fresh, creamy haul, is simmering, while clams, scattered willy-nilly over a blackened pan, sizzle in the heat, sputtering saltwater that jumps across the pan before disappearing in a sigh of steam. Mussels sit in a pot with a splash of boiling seawater and a glug of beer. We pull them out, snapping the top shells off and using them to scoop the meat out of the bottoms. As I eat, savoring the taste of the sea on my tongue, I am grateful for my parents’ devotion to Prince Edward Island. Standing here, with ruddy stains on my bare feet and a curl of smoke in the air, I feel echoes of my childhood and know that I, too, have come home. 

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Prince Edward Island dishes, from left: lemon mayonnaise smashed potato salad, Acadian salt cod cakes, scalloped potatoes, and seafood bubbly bake.

Acadian Salt Cod Cakes

SERVES 6-8

Salt cod is mashed with fluffy potatoes to make these bite-size pan-fried cakes (pictured above, second from left). Sweet-tart green tomato chow is a traditional accompaniment (see recipe at right).

- 1 lb. salt cod
- 2 lb. russet potatoes
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped savory
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- Lemon wedges, for serving
- Green tomato chow, for serving (optional, see recipe at right)

1 Place cod in a 2-qt. saucepan and cover with 2" cold water; bring to a boil over high heat and cook for 20 minutes. Drain cod, return to saucepan and repeat process twice more. Transfer cod to a bowl and flake with a fork into large chunks; set aside.

2 Boil potatoes in a 4-qt. saucepan of salted water until tender, 35-40 minutes; drain and refrigerate until cold, about 1 hour. Peel and finely chop potatoes; add to cod. Add savory, onion, egg, salt, and pepper. Using your hands, mix together, mashing slightly, until combined. Form mixture into twenty 2" cakes.

3 Heat half the oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, and adding more oil as needed, fry cod cakes, flipping once, until golden brown, 6-8 minutes. Transfer cakes to paper towels to drain, and season with salt and pepper. Serve with lemon wedges and green tomato chow, if you like.

Bread Pudding with Caramel Sauce

SERVES 8-10

A veil of luscious caramel sauce cloaks this gooey bread pudding (pictured on page 87) inspired by the one served at Brackley Beach's Millstream Restaurant and Dairy Bar on Prince Edward Island.

For the pudding:

- 5 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted, plus more for greasing
- 6 kaiser rolls, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/3 cup maple syrup
- 1 tbsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 5 eggs, lightly beaten
- 5 cups whole milk
- 1/3 cup raisins (optional)

For the sauce:

- 8 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 tbsp. light corn syrup
- 3/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- 1 tbsp. dark rum
- 1/2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt

1 Make the bread pudding: Heat oven to 400°. Grease a 9" x 13" casserole dish with butter; fill with the cut rolls. Whisk 5 tbsp. melted butter, brown sugar, maple syrup, cinnamon, vanilla, salt, and eggs in a bowl. Whisk in milk. Stir in raisins, if using; pour evenly over rolls and mix gently. Set aside for 15 minutes. Using your hands, gently mash rolls and custard together; smooth the top. Bake until most of the custard is absorbed, about 30 minutes. Let cool.

2 Make the sauce: Heat butter, corn syrup, and 1/4 cup water in a 2-qt. saucepan over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until butter is melted, about 3 minutes. Stir in both sugars and scrape down sides of pan with a rubber spatula. Bring mixture to a boil and cook, without stirring, until golden brown and a candy thermometer inserted in sauce reads 245°, 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat; carefully add heavy cream, rum, lemon juice, and salt; stir until sauce is smooth. Let caramel sauce cool to room temperature.

3 Using a toothpick, poke several holes in pudding. Pour 2/3 sauce over the top. Cut pudding into squares; serve additional caramel sauce on the side.

Chicken Fricot

SERVES 8

In this beloved Acadian comfort

food, airy dumplings float in a hearty chicken and vegetable soup (pictured on page 82).

For the soup:

- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 tsp. olive oil
- 2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 medium carrot, roughly chopped
- 1 stalk celery, roughly chopped
- 6 cups chicken stock
- 4 sprigs savory
- 1 large russet potato, peeled and cut into 1" pieces

For the dumplings:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped savory
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 cup milk

1 Make the soup: Heat butter and oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Season chicken with salt and pepper; working in batches, cook, flipping once, until browned, 5-7 minutes. Transfer chicken to a plate; set aside. Add garlic, onion, carrot, and celery to pan; cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 7 minutes. Return chicken and its juices to pan with stock and savory; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, covered, until chicken is tender, 8-10 minutes. Add potato and cook, until tender, about 8 minutes more. Using a slotted spoon, transfer chicken to cutting board and discard savory. When chicken is cool enough to handle, shred into large pieces and return to pan. Bring soup to a simmer.

2 Make the dumplings: Whisk flour, savory, baking powder, and salt in a bowl. Stir in milk until a thick batter forms. Using a 1-oz. scoop or 2 tablespoons, drop batter into simmering soup. When dumplings are puffed and slightly firm, cover pan and continue to cook about 5 minutes more.

Green Tomato Chow

MAKES ABOUT 3 CUPS

On Canada's Prince Edward Island, firm, underripe green tomatoes are transformed into a tangy-sweet condiment (pictured on page 84) that is often served alongside salt cod cakes (see recipe at left).

- 2 lb. small green tomatoes, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup fine sea salt
- 1 tbsp. whole black peppercorns
- 2 tsp. cardamom seeds
- 2 tsp. coriander seeds
- 1 tsp. whole allspice berries
- 1 tsp. yellow mustard seeds
- 5 whole cloves
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 dried chiles de árbol, stemmed
- 1 stick cinnamon, broken in half
- 1 2"-piece ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
- Cheesecloth, for spices
- 3 cups white wine vinegar
- 2 cups sugar

1 Toss tomatoes, onion, and salt in a 9" x 13" baking dish and press into an even layer. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate overnight.

2 Next day, pour tomato mixture into a colander and rinse well under cold running water. Spread tomatoes and onions in a single layer onto a double thickness of paper towels; blot dry with more paper towels.

3 Heat peppercorns, cardamom, coriander, allspice, mustard, cloves, bay leaves, chiles, and cinnamon in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until seeds begin to pop, 3-5 minutes. Transfer spices along with ginger to a piece of cheesecloth; tie into a tight package.

4 Add vinegar and sugar to saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat; cook, stirring, until sugar is dissolved, 1-2 minutes. Add spice package and reserved tomato mixture; reduce heat to medium-low. Cook, stirring occasionally, until tomatoes have broken down and sauce is very thick, about 1 1/2 hours. Let chow cool to room temperature before serving. Store in refrigerator up to 2 weeks.



Garganelli Mac 'n Cheese with Roasted Jalapenos and Bacon

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

- 2 fresh jalapeno peppers
- About 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 4 ounces applewood-smoked bacon, diced
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons unbleached all purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- 8 ounces Cabot Seriously Sharp Cheddar, grated (about 2 cups)
- Salt to taste
- 1 pound dry garganelli pasta
- 1 cup panko (Japanese-style) breadcrumbs

① Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Rub jalapenos with oil and place on baking sheet. Roast for 12 to 15 minutes or until skin is blistered and darkened in spots. ② Meanwhile, cook bacon in skillet until browned and crispy; transfer with slotted spoon to paper towels to drain. ③ Transfer peppers to small plastic bag and let stand. When cool enough to handle, remove and discard stems, skin and seeds. Chop flesh into fine dice and set aside. ④ In saucepan, melt butter over medium-low heat. Add flour and whisk to combine. Let cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. ⑤ Slowly whisk in milk.

Continue cooking, stirring often, until sauce is simmering and thickened. Reduce heat to low and let sauce simmer gently for 20 minutes. ⑥ Stir in cheddar; when cheese is melted, season with salt as needed. ⑦ Preheat oven to 350° F. Cook pasta in large pot of boiling salted water until al dente; drain and return to pot. Add cheese sauce and reserved jalapenos and stir together. ⑧ Transfer pasta to 2-quart baking dish. Top with bacon and breadcrumbs. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until browned on top and bubbling throughout.



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Lemon Mayonnaise Smashed Potato Salad

SERVES 8

Homemade lemon mayonnaise adds zesty flavor to tender, coarsely mashed potatoes in this recipe from author Melissa Buote (pictured on page 90).

- 2 lb. russet potatoes
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 6 egg yolks
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. dry mustard
- Zest of 2 lemons, plus $\frac{1}{3}$ cup fresh lemon juice
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups canola oil
- 5 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, and roughly chopped
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced

1 Boil potatoes in a 4-qt. saucepan of salted water until tender, 35-40 minutes; drain and refrigerate until cold, about 1 hour. Peel and roughly chop potatoes; place in a large bowl and set aside.

2 Purée yolks, sugar, mustard, lemon zest and juice, salt, and pepper in a blender until smooth. With the motor running, slowly drizzle in oil until emulsified; pour dressing over potatoes and season with salt and pepper. Using a potato masher, gently mash potatoes until almost smooth. Stir in half each eggs and scallions. Garnish with remaining eggs and scallions.

Marion Buote's Meat Pie

SERVES 10-12

This flaky double-crust pie (pictured on page 87) is filled with a sumptuous beef, chicken, and pork stew. The recipe comes from the author's grandmother Marion Buote.

For the crust:

- 5 cups flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 tbsp. kosher salt
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. dry mustard
- 1 tsp. grated lemon zest
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups unsalted butter, cubed and chilled, plus more for greasing
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ice-cold water

For the filling:

- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup olive oil
- 2 small yellow onions (1 finely chopped, 1 halved)
- 1 lb. beef shoulder, trimmed and cut into 2" pieces
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 2" pieces
- 1 lb. pork shoulder, trimmed and cut into 2" pieces
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 8 cups chicken stock
- 2 sprigs, plus 2 tbsp. finely chopped thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 tbsp. flour
- 3 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 2 tsp. dry mustard

4 eggs, lightly beaten

1 Make the crust: Pulse flour, salt, mustard, and lemon zest together in a food processor until combined. Add butter and pulse until pea-size crumbles form. Continue to pulse, sprinkling in ice-cold water until dough comes together. Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface and form into a ball. Form $\frac{2}{3}$ of dough into a flat disk; wrap in plastic wrap. Repeat with remaining dough; chill 1 hour.

2 Make the filling: Heat half the oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add chopped onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, 5-7 minutes. Transfer to a bowl; set aside. Add remaining oil to pan, and season meats with salt and pepper. Working in batches, cook meats, turning as needed, until browned, 25-30 minutes. Return all meat to pan. Add halved onion, stock, thyme sprigs, and bay leaf; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, covered, until meat is very tender, about 1 hour. Using a slotted spoon, transfer meat to a plate and let cool. Simmer liquid until reduced to 2 cups, about 40 minutes. Strain into a large bowl, discarding solids; set aside to cool. When meat is cool enough to handle, shred and add to reduced cooking liquid. Add reserved chopped onion, plus chopped thyme, flour, vinegar, mustard, half the beaten eggs, and salt and pepper; stir to combine.

3 Assemble and bake the pie: Heat oven to 350°. Grease a 9" x 13" baking dish with butter; set aside. On a lightly floured surface, roll larger disk of dough into a 13" x 17" rectangle about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. Fit dough into greased pan, letting excess dough hang over edges of pan. Spread filling evenly over bottom of crust. Roll remaining smaller disk of dough into a 11" x 15" rectangle about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick; transfer to top of dish. Trim excess dough and fold inward, pinching and crimping edges to seal. Using a knife, cut 4 slits in top crust and brush with remaining beaten eggs; bake until golden brown and cooked through, about 1 hour. Let pie cool slightly before slicing and serving.

Old-Fashioned Scalloped Potatoes

SERVES 8

Thinly sliced potatoes and onions are baked in a rich sauce for this classic crowd-pleaser from Prince Edward Island (pictured on page 90).

- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter, plus more for greasing
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups heavy cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk
- 3 tbsp. finely chopped thyme

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

- $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and very thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. paprika

Heat oven to 350°. Grease an 8" square baking dish with butter; set aside. Melt butter in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic and onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, 8-10 minutes. Add flour; cook, stirring, until smooth, 2 minutes. Add cream, milk, thyme, salt, and pepper; bring to a boil. Add potatoes; cook, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are just tender, 8-10 minutes. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish. Using a spoon, press mixture down; sprinkle with paprika. Bake until golden brown and a knife inserted into middle of potatoes slides in easily, about 40 minutes.

Seafood Bubbly Bake

SERVES 6

North Rustico Harbour's Blue Mus-sel Café uses haddock, lobster, and scallops in this creamy baked dish (pictured on page 90). Any combination of seafood—cod, clams, mussels, shrimp—will work just as well.

- 6 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 oz. white mushrooms, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small yellow onion, finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry white wine
- 4 tbsp. flour
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream
- 4 oz. cooked lobster meat, cut into 1" pieces
- 4 oz. skinless haddock, pin bones removed, cut into 1" pieces
- 4 large sea scallops, thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. dry mustard
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup fine bread crumbs
- 3 tbsp. grated cheddar cheese
- 1 tsp. paprika
- Roughly chopped parsley, for garnish (optional)

1 Heat oven to 400°. Melt 4 tbsp. butter in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, garlic, celery, bell pepper, and onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 8 minutes. Add wine; cook until liquid is reduced by half, about 3 minutes. Add flour; cook, stirring until smooth, for 2 minutes. Whisk in milk and cream; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook until slightly thickened, 3-4 minutes. Stir in lobster, haddock, scallops, lemon juice,

mustard, salt, and pepper. Divide mixture evenly among six 6-oz. ramekins; place ramekins on a baking sheet and set aside.

2 Mix bread crumbs, cheese, and paprika in a bowl; sprinkle mixture evenly over each ramekin and dot with remaining butter. Bake until lightly browned and bubbling in the center, about 20 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley, if you like.

Water-Prince Corner Shop Chowder

SERVES 8-10

Laden with seafood, this chowder (pictured on page 86) is adapted from the one served at the Water-Prince Corner Shop and Lobster Pound in Charlottetown on Prince Edward Island.

- $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. salt cod
- 6 cups fish stock
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. skinless haddock, pin bones removed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. skinless halibut, pin bones removed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. bacon, roughly chopped
- 6 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 3 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 lb. waxy potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. cooked lobster meat, cut into 1" pieces
- $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. jumbo lump crabmeat, picked over for shell pieces
- $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. large sea scallops, roughly chopped
- Kosher salt and freshly ground white pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp. finely chopped tarragon

1 Place cod in a 2-qt. saucepan and cover with 2" cold water; bring to a boil over high heat and cook for 20 minutes. Drain cod, return to saucepan, and repeat process twice more. Transfer cod to a bowl and flake with a fork into large chunks; set aside.

2 Bring fish stock to a boil in an 8-qt. saucepan. Add haddock and halibut; reduce heat to medium. Cook until fish is tender, 5-7 minutes. Strain fish and reserve stock. Shred fish into 1" pieces; set aside.

3 Wipe saucepan clean and add bacon; return to medium-high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until fat is rendered, 8-10 minutes. Add butter, celery, and onion; cook until soft, 5-7 minutes. Add flour; cook, stirring until smooth, for 2 minutes. Add reserved stock, plus cream; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and add potatoes; cook until potatoes are very tender, 18-20 minutes. Add reserved salt cod, haddock and halibut, plus lobster, crab, scallops, salt and white pepper; cook until scallops are tender, 3-4 minutes. Stir in tarragon before serving.

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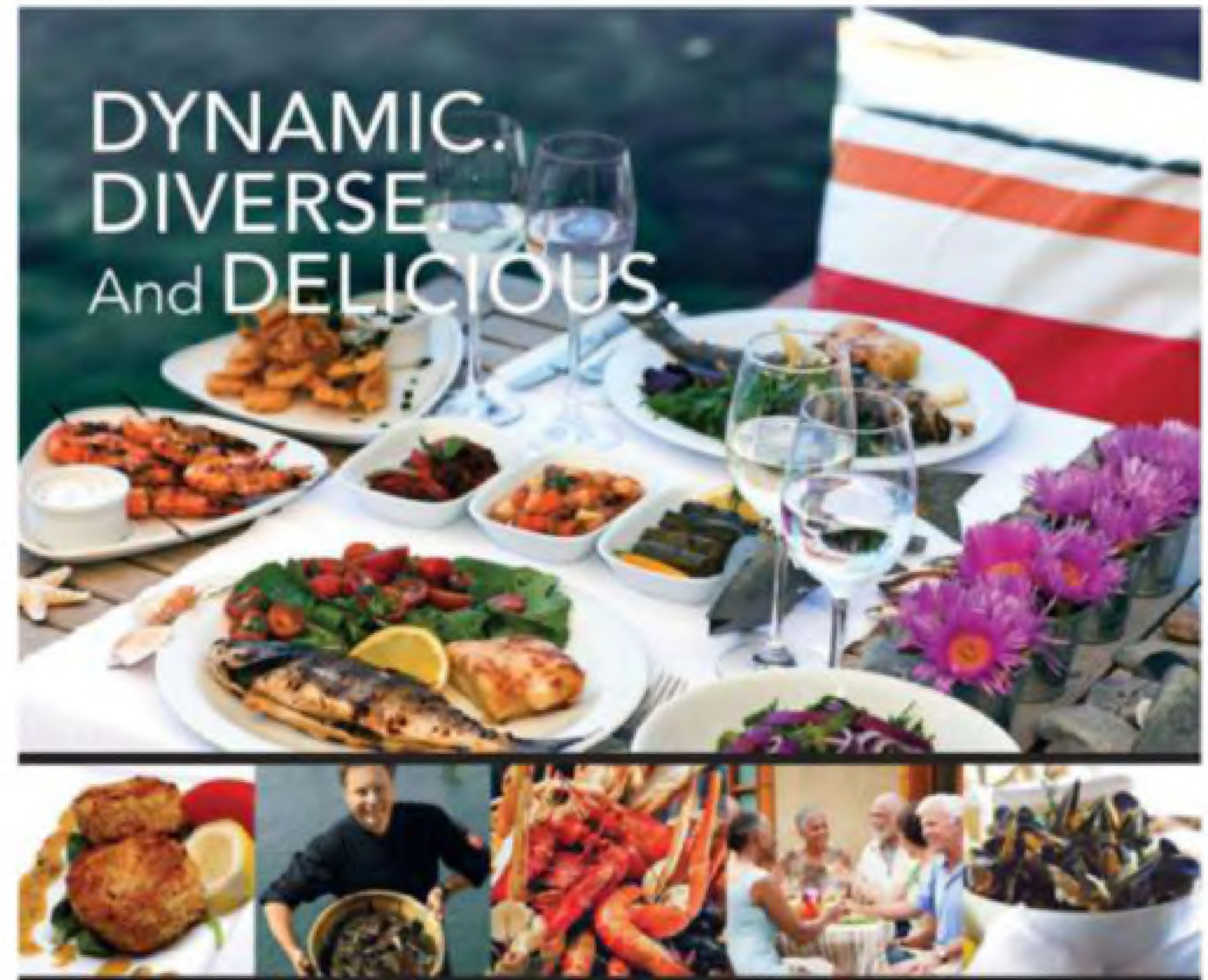


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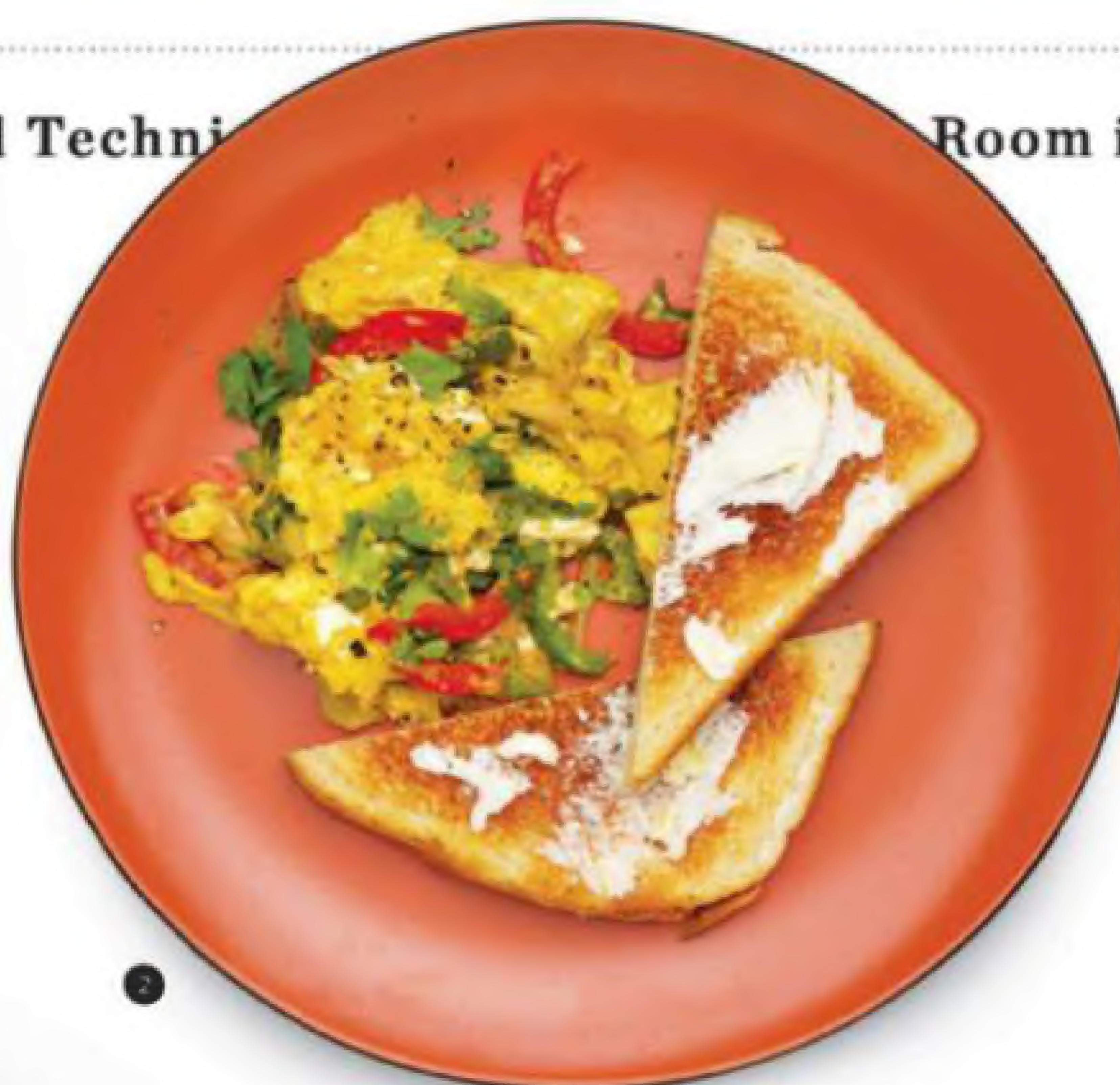
KITCHEN

and Techni

Room in the House



1



2



3



4



5



6

Don't Waste the Paste

Preparing the ingredient-packed pastes for traditional Thai curries (see “The Star of Siam,” page 43) is a labor-intensive process, so most Thai cooks grind a big batch at once to yield enough for several meals. We love having extra paste on hand; in addition to curries, the spicy, aromatic blends bring a burst of flavor to all kinds of dishes. **1** To make a fiery, herbaceous vinaigrette, we like to whisk green curry paste with fresh cilantro and basil, rice wine vinegar, a bit of palm sugar, and canola oil. Like Argentinean chimichurri, it's perfect for drizzling over flaky white fish such as halibut or cod. **2** Green curry paste is also a wonderful addition to a breakfast scramble. Sauté onions and peppers with the paste, then whisk a touch more into your beaten eggs before adding them to the skillet for a pop of color and hints of citrus and chile. **3** Use yellow curry paste for roasted vegetables like baby potatoes: Tossed with curry paste, crushed garlic cloves, and olive oil before roasting, they make an aromatic side dish to go with grilled steak or chicken. (Carrots, cauliflower florets, and Brussels sprouts work just as well.) **4** To accompany fried eggs, we make a quick breakfast sausage by mixing red curry paste with ground pork, garlic, and chopped cilantro, shaping it into patties that we brown in a pan. Red curry paste also imparts an herbal, gingery flavor and a peppery kick to chicken. **5** Rub the paste under chicken skin before searing, then spread more over slightly browned pieces before finishing them in the oven to give the bird a rich red hue. **6** For a Thai-style noodle dish, fry shrimp, garlic, and yellow curry paste in a touch of canola oil until the shrimp are just cooked through, then add a little chicken stock or water to create a sauce. To finish, toss in cooked rice noodles or linguini, blanched vegetables, and fresh basil. —Judy Haubert

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Sour Power

Overly sweet commercial sour mixes took off in the 1950s, giving classic drinks like whiskey sours a bad name. But to make excellent sours—spirits spiked with citrus juice and sugar—all it takes is a fresh mix. *SAVEUR* contributing editor David Wondrich begins his aromatic all-lemon sour mix with an oleo-saccharin, a traditional muddle of citrus peel and sugar, then finishes it with fresh lemon juice, resulting in cocktails with intense lemon flavors. Other drinks, like the juicy, exuberant Hawaiian cocktails in this issue (see “A Toast to Paradise,” page 18) require a mellower mix. To prepare the variation from the Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort, stir a half cup superfine sugar with a half cup boiling water in a one-quart heatproof jar until the sugar dissolves; let cool. Stir in one and a half cups fresh lime juice and a half cup fresh lemon juice. Refrigerate for up to two weeks. —*Leila Clifford*



Greased Lightning

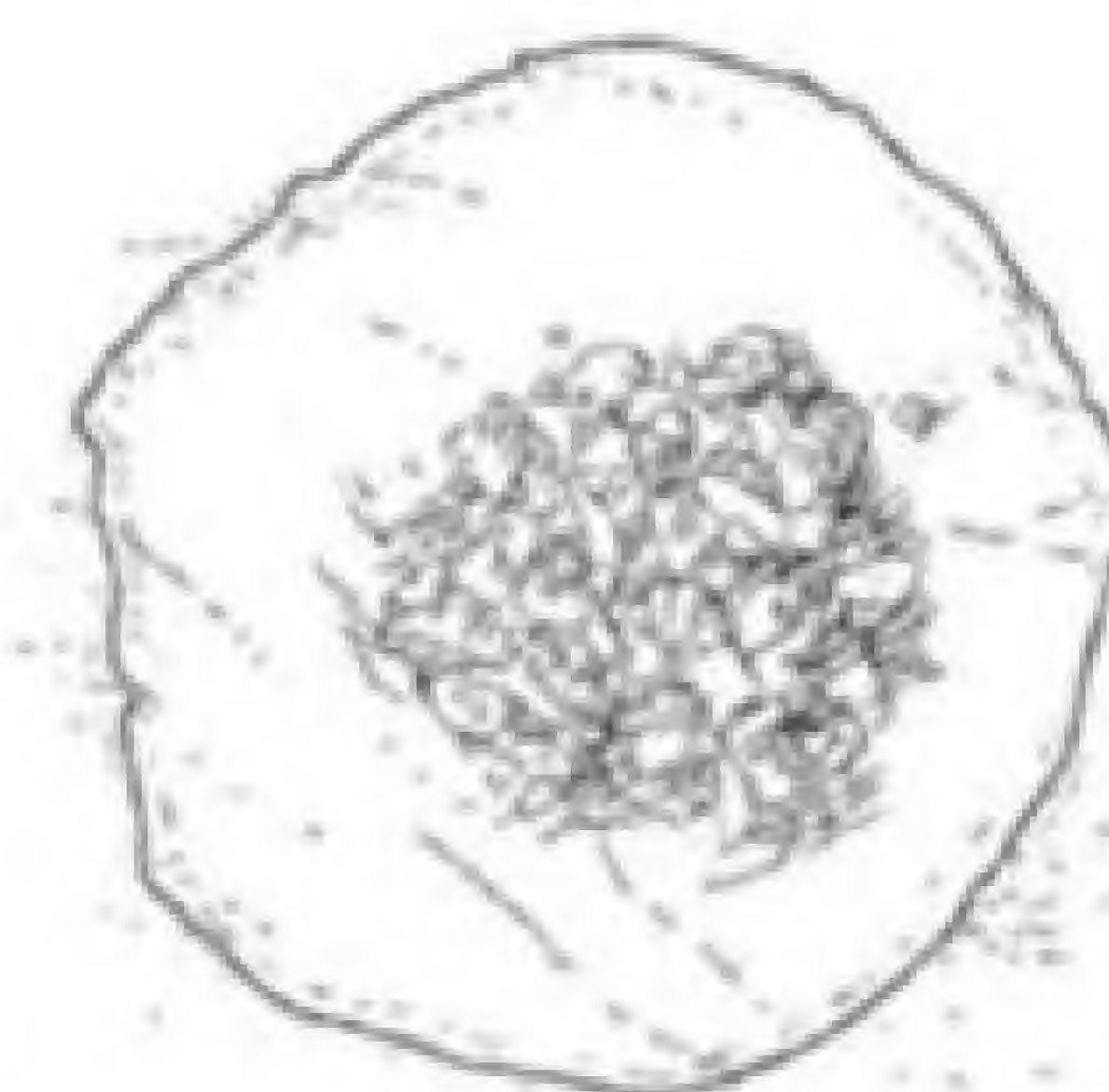
When I learned that Hungarian home cooks kept jars of *zsír*—a blend of rendered bacon fat and minced cracklings—by their stoves, I knew the *SAVEUR* test kitchen was in for a good time. Though modern cooks are often turned off by the idea of lard, rendered pork fat improves all sorts of foods if given a chance, and the soft, flaky texture it lends pastries is unbeatable. Lard is a traditional cooking fat in many cultures, so there are plenty of variations, each with different strengths in the kitchen. Here's a guide to the most common types (see *The Pantry*, page 100, for purchasing information). **Manteca Pura:** This caramel-colored Mexican-style lard, made by rendering pork fat, lends smoky depth to everything it touches. It's great for frying eggs, sautéing greens,

or cooking any dishes that call for quick pan-frying. Mixed with flour, paprika, and sour cream, it adds a meaty boost to Hungarian bean and ham soup (see page 80 for recipe). **Armour Lard:** The pork fat most commonly found in U.S. supermarkets is pearly white and shelf-stable with a mild flavor. It has a high smoke point of around 400 degrees that makes the hydrogenated block well-suited for deep-frying the Hungarian braised and fried pork spare-ribs (see page 81 for recipe). **Leaf Lard:** This delicate, neutral-tasting fat from around the pig's kidneys is especially prized in the pastry kitchen, where it yields tender crusts. It's our top pick when baking fruit pies and beef empanadas (see page 64 for recipe). —*Kellie Evans*



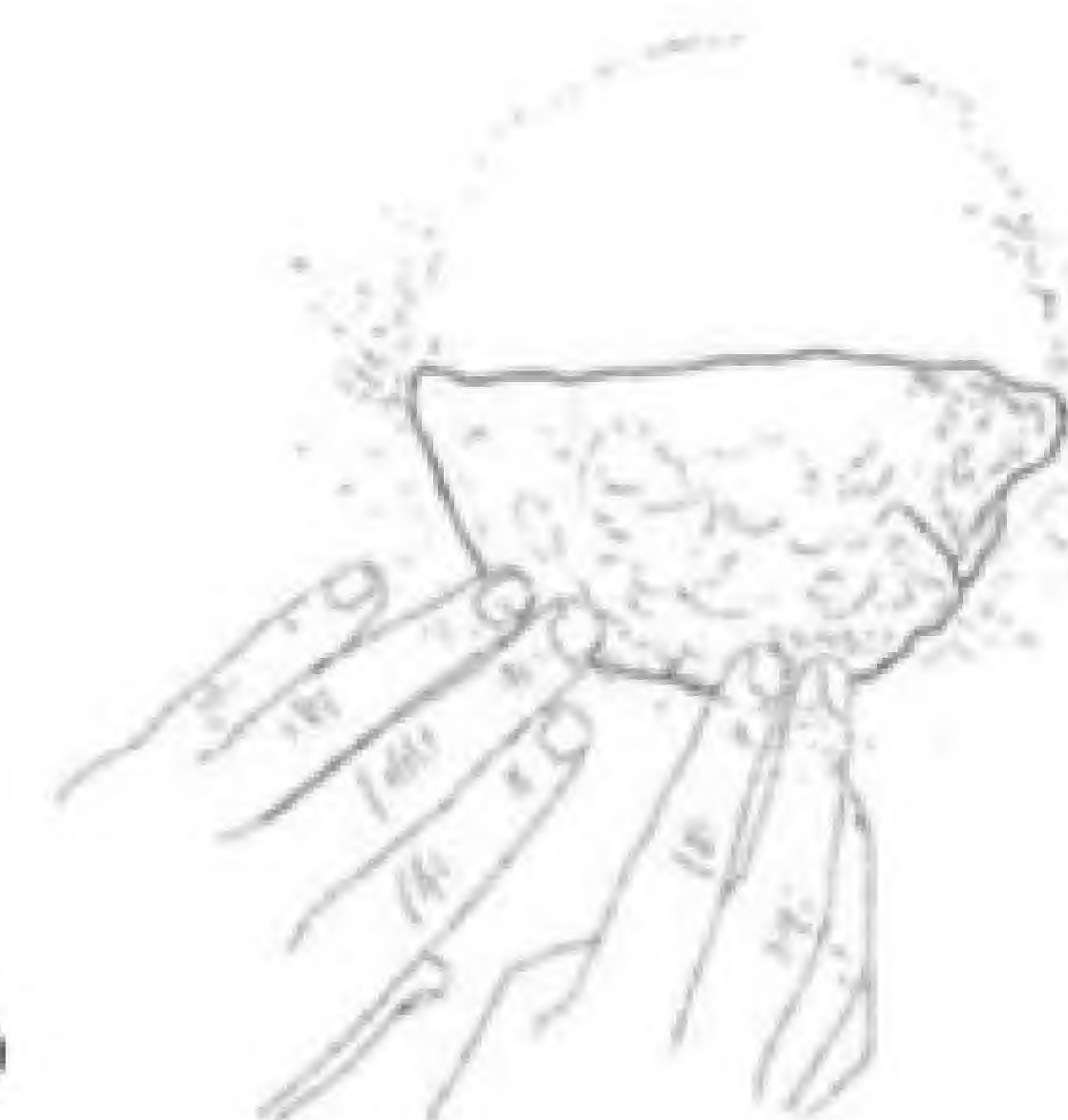
PINCH PERFECT

Empanadas come in many shapes and sizes in Argentina (see “On Edge” page 61), but the most iconic shape sports the crimp, a pleated border that often fringes meat-filled versions. As we discovered when testing the empanada recipes, the crimp seal looks complex with its ruffled edges, but the simple technique is right at your fingertips. Here's how to crimp Argentine-style empanadas. —*Judy Haubert*



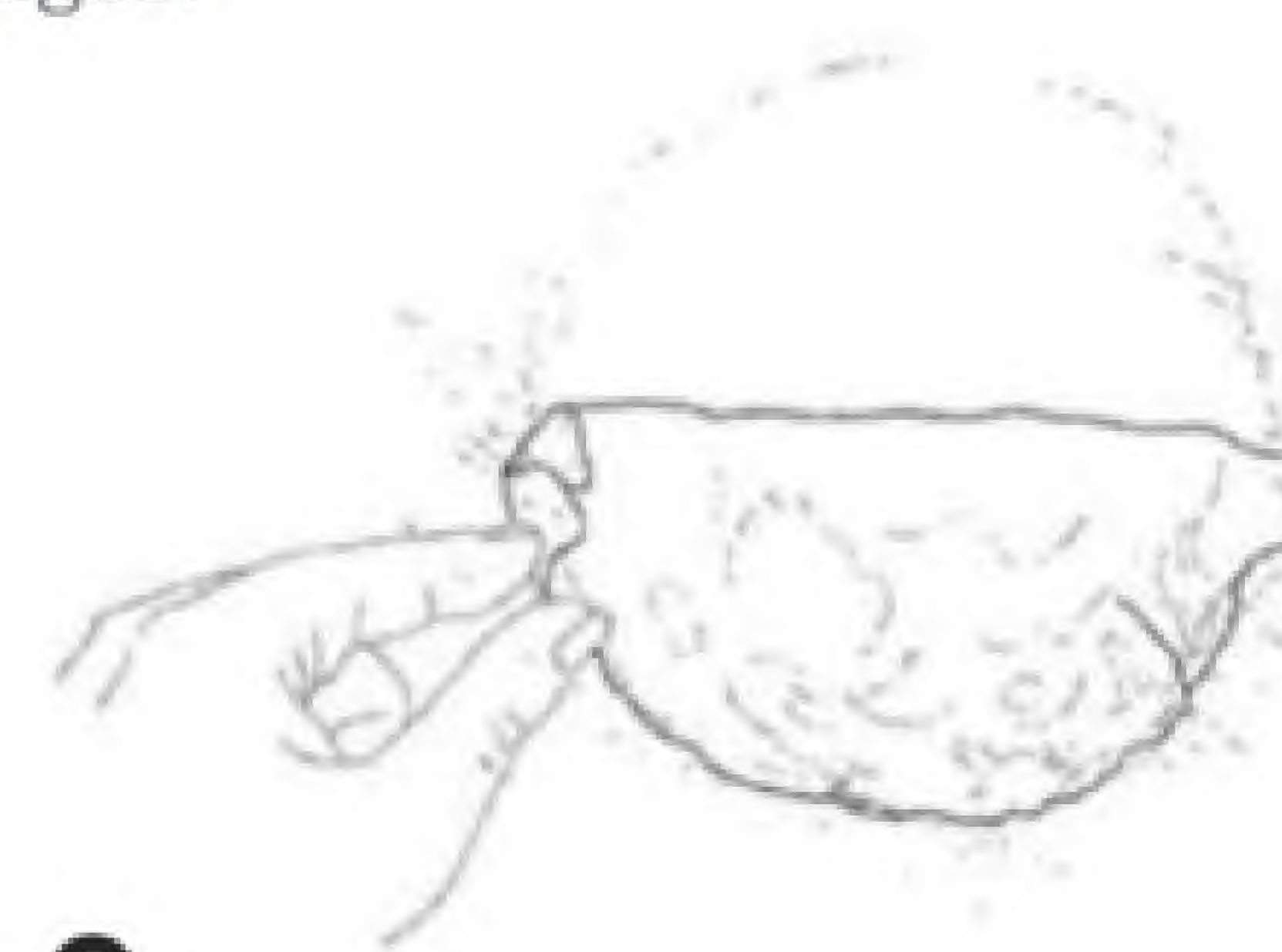
1

On a lightly floured surface, roll a two-inch ball of dough into a five-inch circle. Place three tablespoons of filling in the center of the circle, leaving a one-inch border.



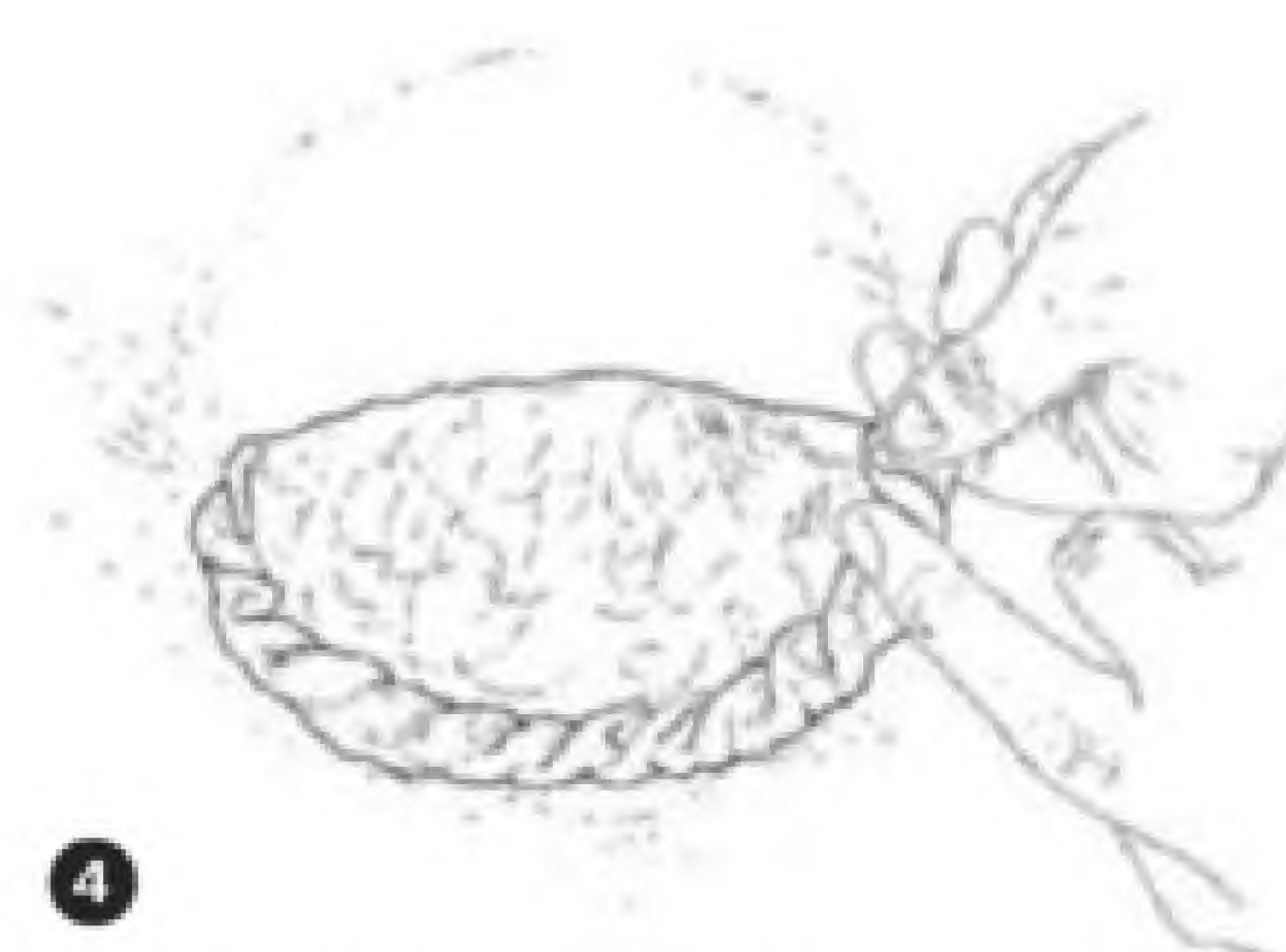
2

Fold the dough in half over the filling, forming a half circle, then use your fingers to gently press and seal the edges.



3

Dog-ear one corner of the half circle. Then move along the curved edge and pinch a half-inch of dough next to the dog-ear, stretching it toward you if necessary before folding it back so it overlaps the dog-eared edge.



4

Use your free hand to hold the previous folds in place as you continue to pinch and fold the dough in half-inch sections, slightly overlapping each previous fold, until you reach the opposite corner.

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A GUIDE TO EVENTS, PROMOTIONS & PRODUCTS



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Going to Seeds

Though the SAVEUR kitchen was initially unsure how to work with passion fruit as an ingredient, as we cooked through the recipes for our story on Buenos Aires (see “Lunch at Your Leisure,” page 56) we quickly came to love the fruit’s versatility. Cut in half, the firm outer shell yields a cluster of membranes, known as arils, filled with a pleasingly sour, fragrant juice and crunchy black seeds. This bright orange pulp is delicious when eaten raw right out of the fruit, or spooned over a scoop of vanilla ice cream for a pop of texture and tang. And the fruit’s musky but refreshing juice maintains its delicate floral aromas when heated. This means the passion fruit’s complex tropical notes are just as vibrant fresh as they are in cooked sauces and syrups, like the one drizzled over the delicate custard in our Buenos Aires story (see page 66 for recipe). Two kinds of passion fruits grow on the *Passiflora edulis*, a sun-loving vine with psychedelic purple flowers native to tropical South America. You can differentiate the grapefruit-sized yellow passion fruit from its purple sibling by a shiny rind, brown seeds, and intense flavor. Though we prefer working with the purple passion fruit, which has a gentler scent and flavor, the same shopping strategy applies to both varieties. A taut skin points to sour, underripe pulp (wrap the fruits in newspaper to speed up the ripening process, and don’t store them in the fridge), while shriveled fruits indicate the flesh inside is overripe and may actually taste fermented. For the most aromatic fruit, look for spheres with just slightly wrinkled skins, and always choose the heaviest among them, which tend to be loaded with ripe pulp. —Dominique Lemoine



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THE PANTRY

A Guide to Resources

In producing the stories for this issue, we discovered ingredients and information too good to keep to ourselves. Please feel free to raid our pantry!

BY KELLIE EVANS

Fare

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Essay

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Classic

Use our favorite tools when preparing the Thai curry recipes (see pages 43–52). Purchase a **Cuisinart Mini Prep Plus food processor** from Cuisinart (\$40; 800/211-9604; cuisinart.com); **Zebra 16-inch stainless steel wok turner**, available from Amazon (\$26; amazon.com); **13" Thai street vendor wok**, available from Import Food (\$24; 888/618-8424; importfood.com); **4-quart Multi-Clad Pro stainless saucepan** from Cuisinart (\$70; 800/211-9604; cuisinart.com); **10-inch cast-iron skillet** from Lodge (\$25; 423/837-7181; lodgemfg.com), **blade coffee and spice grinder**, available from Kitchen Aid (\$30; 800/541-6390; kitchenaid.com); **Tao charcoal burner** from Import Food (\$65; 888/618-8424; importfood.com); **Wusthof Classic Ikon 8-inch Cook's Knife**, available from Bed Bath and Beyond (\$120; visit bedbathandbeyond.com for locations); and for a **10-inch granite mortar and pestle**, contact Temple of Thai (\$151; templeofthai.com). To buy our favorite brands of coconut milk and cream, order **Aroy-D UHT coconut milk** (\$10 for a 33-oz. pack) and **cream** (\$10 for a 34-oz. box), both available from amazon.com; **Savoy coconut cream**, contact ishopindian.com (\$3 for a 14-oz. can; 877/786-8876; ishopindian.com), and **Mae Ploy coconut milk**, visit pinoyoutlet.com (\$3 for a 19-oz. can; 845/765-0227; pinoyoutlet.com). To shop our favorite Thai ingredients, purchase **Tra-chang shrimp paste**, available from Amazon (\$7 for 3-oz. container; amazon.com), **dried kaffir lime leaves** from Grocery Thai (\$4 for 25-35 leaves; 818/469-9407; grocerythai.com), **small Asian shallots** can be found at your local Asian grocer, for **galangal root** contact Melissa's Produce (price varies by season; 800/588-0151; melissas.com), Venus **frozen fish balls** available from Phil Am Foods (\$3 for an 8-oz. bag; 201/963-0455; philamfood.com), **Thai eggplants** from Melissa's Produce (price varies by season; 800/588-0151; melissas.com), **Tip-aros fish sauce** at grocerythai.com (\$3 for 23-oz. bottle; 818/469-9407), **kaffir limes** from Import Food (\$20 for 12 limes plus priority shipping; 888/618-8424; importfood.com); **fresh Thai prik kee noo chiles** from Temple of Thai (\$4 for a 2-oz. package; templeofthai.com), **Thai basil**, available from Import Food (\$16 for 24 spriggs, 14-oz. package; 888/618-8424; importfood.com), **dried puya chiles** and **chiles de arbol**, both available from Marx Foods (\$23 each for a 4-oz. bag; 866/588-6279; marxfoods.com), **Thailand dried shrimp**, from asiansupermarket365.com (\$11 for an 8-oz.

bag; 888/822-8910), **green pickled peppercorns**, contact Temple of Thai (\$7 for a 16-oz. jar; templeofthai.com), fresh **krachai**, available from Green Harvest (\$7 for 1 bunch; 800/68-1014; greenharvest.com.au), **Chinese long beans** can be found at your local Asian market, **Caravelle tamarind concentrate**, contact Easy Thai Easy Go (\$4 for a 12-oz. jar; easythaieasygo.com), **palm sugar**, available from Kalustyan's (\$8 for a 1-lb. bag; 800/352-3451; kalustyans.com), and **chayote squash** can be found at your local Mexican market or at Whole Foods Market (visit wholefoods.com for a list of locations).

Hungary

Expand your Hungarian spice cabinet by purchasing our favorite paprikas (see page 78). Order **Hungarian Sweet Paprika** available from Kalustyan's (\$8 for a 3-oz. package; 212/685-3451; kalustyans.com), **Sze-ged Hungarian Hot Paprika** available from World Harvest International and Gourmet Foods (\$6 for a 5-oz. tin; 217/356-4444; worldharvestfoods.com), **Univer Sweet Ann Fresh Crushed Mild Paprika** available from Budapest Deli (\$3.99 for a 7-oz./200 gram jar; 818/886-6647; budapestdelica.com), and **Univer Piros Arany Hot Paprika Paste** from Otto's Hungarian Deli (\$5 for a 6-oz. tube; 818/845-0433; hungariandeli.com). To prepare the crackling scones with prune jam recipe (see page 38), use **prune lekvar**, available from Nuts.com (\$6 for a 12-oz. container; 800/558-6887; nuts.com).

Buenos Aires

To make the passion fruit custard recipe (see page 66), buy **passionfruit concentrate** from The Perfect Purée of Napa Valley (\$25 for a 30-oz. jar; 800/556-3707; perfectpuree.com). Use **spanish-style fresh cooking chorizo**, available from Hot Paella (\$9.50 for a 14-oz. package; 888/377-2622; hotpaella.com) to prepare the chorizo-stuffed mushrooms recipe (see page 64).

Kitchen

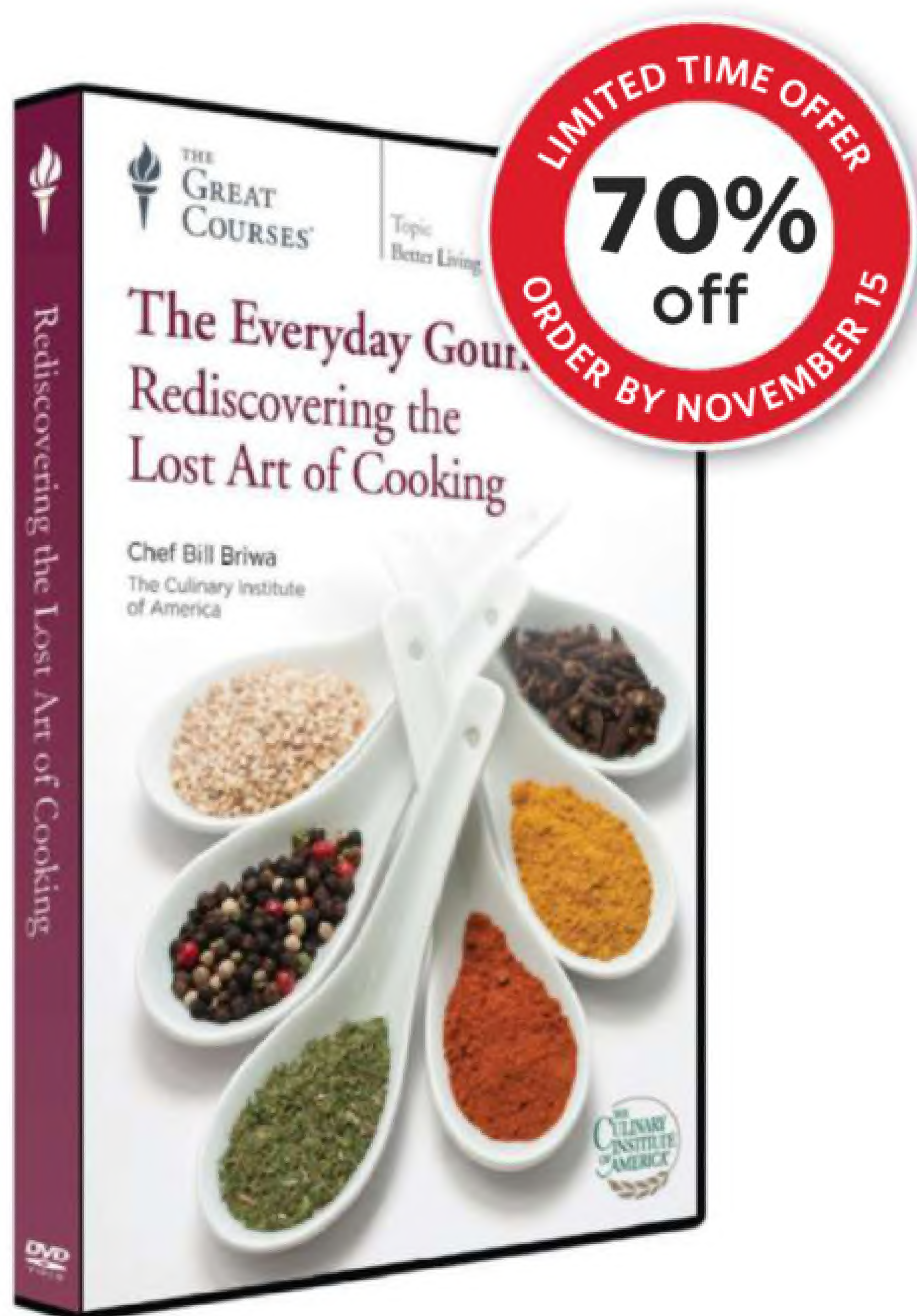
Order a box of ripe, delicious **passion fruit** from Melissa's Produce (price varies by season; 800/588-0151; melissas.com). Cook using our favorite lards, buy **manteca pura** from your local Mexican market or contact Emperor Food (\$5 for a 1.75-lb. container; 305/824-9444; emperorfood.com). **Armour lard** can be found at your local Walmart (visit walmart.com for a list of locations), and you can render your own fat using **leaf lard**, available from your local butcher or contact Heritage Foods USA (about \$8 per pound; 718/389-0985; heritagefoodsusa.com).

Correction: In our August/September "Agenda" column, we located Chehalis, Washington, as being in eastern Washington. It is, in fact, in southwestern Washington, and we regret the error.



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